

Wonderland Day Nursery

Works Road, Letchworth, HERTFORDSHIRE, SG6 1FR

Inspection date	23/04/2013
Previous inspection date	15/04/2009

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		1
The contribution of the early years provision to the well-being of children		1
The effectiveness of the leadership and management of the early years provision		1

The quality and standards of the early years provision

This provision is outstanding

- Children have exemplary support to develop literacy and communication skills through robust staff understanding and practice, along with support for parents to contribute to this area of learning.
- Children show high levels of security in the setting. They make independent choices about where, and with whom, they wish to play and staff record and display personal statements of what children have enjoyed or discovered. As a result children develop excellent self-esteem and attitudes towards learning.
- Children's learning and development is closely monitored through precise assessment. Consequently, the planning is sharply focused and leads to rapid development for children, taking into account their starting points.
- Staff engage in highly effective methods of performance management and professional development. Consequently, staff are motivated and knowledgeable.
- The setting uses highly successful strategies to engage all parents and offers valuable information for extending children's learning at home. As a result, children's learning is supported to the full.
- The partnerships established with other settings and other agencies are exemplary and help to support every child to learn and develop to the optimum level.

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
- scheduled more frequently where Ofsted identifies a need to do so, for example where provision was previously judged 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 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
- scheduled 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 all rooms and the outside areas.
- The inspector looked at a selection of policies, procedures and information provided by the provision.
- The inspector carried out a joint observation with the manager.
- The inspector spoke with the director, managers, staff and children at appropriate times throughout the inspection.
- The inspector reviewed a selection of children's observation and assessment development files with key persons.

Inspector
Lynne Talbot

Full Report

Information about the setting

Wonderland Day Nursery was registered in 1994 and is on the Early Years Register and on both the voluntary and compulsory parts of the Childcare Register. It operates from purpose-built premises in Letchworth, Hertfordshire.

The provision is owned and managed by a private individual. It serves the local area and wider community. The provision is accessible to all children. There are enclosed areas available for outdoor play.

The provision employs 46 members of childcare staff. Of these, 35 hold appropriate early years qualifications at level 2 and above, including one staff member with Qualified Teacher Status.

The provision opens Monday to Friday all year round with the exception of bank holidays. Sessions are from 7.30am until 6pm. Children attend for a variety of sessions. There are currently 221 children attending who are in the early years age group. The provision provides funded early education for three- and four-year-old children. It supports a number of children with special educational needs and/or disabilities and children who speak English as an additional language.

What the setting needs to do to improve further

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

- continue to explore further methods to identify the contributions made by parents in children's learning and development.

Inspection judgements

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

Staff have very high expectations of themselves and children. They have an excellent understanding of how to engage children in playing and exploring. This helps children to be highly motivated and, consequently, make rapid progress in their learning and development given their starting points. Staff plan challenges and experiences that motivate children to learn and ensure that they are extremely well-prepared for school. For example, all toddlers and older children explore phonics as an integral part of their day. Small groups explore letters and sounds in all areas of play, including groups which take place outdoors, where they identify initial sounds and letters. They use an accompanying sign for each one which reinforces the learning. Staff introduce all children to cooking activities where they work as a group, and learn to take turns and share.

Younger children add dried foods to melted chocolate, including marshmallows, which they begin to count independently. The praise offered by staff members supports children's self-esteem and their eagerness to continue learning. Staff encourage the children to make connections between their previous experiences. For instance, they compare the colours of the marshmallows to the snow they have seen outside, reinforcing what they already know with their new knowledge.

Children are skilled in planning and making decisions, and they use their emergent knowledge independently throughout the day. Children aged two years and above enjoy sessions of freely chosen activities within the main open-plan play-room. They work together to draw and make marks, using lists and stencils, and can follow instruction leaflets that show them how to make, for instance, masks. Children choose and enjoy story books and non-fiction books in the reading area. They are very observant and eagerly share books, model animals and dinosaurs, with staff members. Children are eager to learn about the dinosaurs because the staff offer them explanations and information. They discuss the teeth of the dinosaurs, those which eat meat and those which eat vegetables, and they tell visitors that the 'stegosaurus has sharp spines!'. Children go on to count the spines on the back of the stegosaurus with the staff member, who is vigilant in monitoring their interests. Children recognise that there are rules to be followed and count the number of people playing within the main free-play areas. They talk about there being more or less, than the displayed number allowed at each activity, before deciding if there is space for them to play. They show that they make considered choices.

Observation and assessment is sharply focused and builds from an initial assessment that fully includes parents and carers. Ongoing assessment includes full use of the Development Matters in the Early Years Foundation Stage guidance. Each child has a written summary, completed at the end of the month, to identify what they have achieved and what has motivated them. This links to the personal statements of what children have discovered, enjoyed, or may not have enjoyed, added to the displays in the setting. Key persons complete sharply focused planning to show each child's next steps and activities to support them. Parents are fully involved in the learning of their children and are provided with home observation forms every month to add to the learning journal. Daily verbal exchange is a key part of that sharing process and enhances the close monitoring of children's learning and development at home and in the setting. Staff continue to explore methods that will enable them to show and identify how the contributions made by parents to the learning journals, in all ways, are used as part of the planning. Thorough monitoring of all children's progress towards the early learning goals takes place. One of the management team works alongside staff in the rooms every day and scrutinises practice and its link to the planning. The management team scrutinise every child's learning journal each month to ensure that each child's next step and objective is being met. Children with specific identified needs, including those where there is no external agency involvement, receive well-planned support to ensure that they make rapid progress. This includes those for whom English is an additional language. These measures mean that the management team securely monitor ongoing learning for every child, the involvement of parents, and the level of engagement by the children.

All staff provide stimulating resources that are accessible and open ended to invite

exploration. For instance, babies explore paint with their hands and brushes, to which rice and coloured sand are added. They explore the tactile experience and babble repeatedly as they swirl and squeeze the mixture. Staff are skilled at managing such activities and closely observe the children to assess their learning. Toddlers explore the messy play room where they become animated as they watch what happens when they bang their hands in flour! They squeal with delight as they watch the clouds of flour settle to the floor before they experiment with making footsteps and compare the size of each one. Staff encourage children to make marks which results in children making circles and lines with their fingers. They support children's investigation which means that they confidently try new activities and extend activities further themselves. For example, a child fetches a wheel from the sand and tries to put the flour in the top. The staff member assists by bringing a scoop for the child to get more flour in each time, making the wheel turn. Staff members gently extend children's language as they model the terms 'full' and 'empty', 'soft' and 'sprinkle' as the children play. As a result, children's language is extended. All children enjoy use of the sensory play room where there are touch screen computers, torches, a projector, and bubble tubes with switches to press to change the colours, and other facilities. Children use this equipment and learn to operate technology with support. The sensory room is also used to promote specific planned activities for individual children. Children show that they are well motivated and very eager to join in; they consistently demonstrate the characteristics of effective learning. Staff are particularly supportive and as a result, the children confidently display their knowledge, solve problems, and initiate activities.

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

The strong skills of all key persons and the highly effective deployment of staff ensures that all children form very secure emotional attachments. Settling-in procedures are conducted at the pace dictated by the child and parent's needs. Parents are instrumental in providing information about children's routines to aid staff in establishing familiar routines. Where there are multiple births the views of parents are considered when assigning key persons for each child. Staff recognise that parents know their children best and make full consideration of the individuality of each child when deciding whether they will have the same, or different, key person. In some instances, where there is a specific need, key person hours of work are changed to match an individual child, and a second key person is also assigned. This supports continuity of care and helps such children to form close attachments which subsequently result in positive development. Staff model good social behaviour for children and offer them frequent praise throughout sessions. Several methods of positive behaviour management are used and strategies are changed according to each child, thus recognising them as individuals. For example, some children enjoy receiving stickers or the use of a chart, while others respond to having a role of responsibility. Children understand that they are respected as individuals because there are methods used to seek and acknowledge their views. For example, wall displays show photographs of children participating in activities with captions expressing what they have said and enjoyed. Furthermore, discussion groups focus on what children like at the setting. For instance, feedback from children stated they loved the garden, didn't like it's 'floor', and there was nowhere to dig. As a result, the review of the outdoor area included false grass and sort surface being installed, and the development of a gardening area.

These methods help children to understand their own feelings and to feel valued.

Children learn about the world around them and become aware of the culture and lives of each other. The 'Wonderland world' board displays the home language of children and any links to other countries. Activities are completed using that information and many parents join the setting to share their culture and heritage. Books and stories are shared in several languages helping all children engage in early literacy. Parents provide full information about their home languages to ensure that the staff can fully support the children's development of communication and language. Children show excellent self-care skills and develop a very secure understanding of healthy eating. They are very well-nourished and their health is fostered. The chefs work alongside a nutritionist to plan and deliver an exciting menu that is freshly cooked from locally sourced ingredients, and which accommodates every child's specific need. Detailed personal healthcare plans are implemented to ensure that dietary needs are closely observed. Older children take responsibility for pouring their drinks and clearing their tables away; this helps to prepare them for attendance in school. Children's understanding of safety is promoted at all times. Road safety kits and role play enhance safety awareness. Children learn to take risks within a safe environment when they use the extremely well-equipped outdoor areas. They plant vegetables and harvest them, thereby learning to consider growing foods for health and the source of the foods that they eat. The free-flow outdoor play is facilitated all year because of the soft play surface and the canopy in use. This means that children can benefit from fresh air and large physical play throughout the year. Outdoor learning is an integral part of the planning and builds closely from children's interests. Hence children have excellent opportunities to progress their physical abilities and extend their learning in their chosen manner.

Transitions within the setting are managed extremely well and, as a result, children's progression through the setting is smooth. For example, regular visits take place by individual children, accompanied by their key person, to their new group well before the move takes place. Parents are kept fully informed of the proposed visits and the new key person's name. Learning journals are transferred with all details of the summary assessments and the next steps for development. The children have an opportunity to mix and be with siblings and children of differing ages during free-play times each day. Hence they are familiar with new adults and children, and learn to make new relationships using a wider play area with scope to learn from others. This promotes smooth transitions within the nursery and helps children to prepare for the time when they move to a new setting. Older children have increasing levels of self-care responsibility which helps to prepare them for any move to a new setting. Staff use information gathered through meetings with schools to prepare children for such a move. They also provide this information to parents to ensure that they are aware of the expectations. All details of the children's learning and development are passed to the new setting. Staff use programmes of analysis with children to gauge their progress to ensure that they are fully prepared for the next stage of their learning. As a result, the transition process is very positive and children thrive.

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

The directors and management team have very high expectations for the quality of care that is offered to children and families. Regular and robust reviews of all paperwork and procedures takes place to ensure that all requirements of the Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage are met. Detailed reviews have taken place to ensure that the setting continues to comply with the revisions to the Early Years Foundation Stage that took place in 2012. Arrangements to safeguard children within the setting are particularly robust. All staff have safeguarding training and safeguarding is reviewed at every team leader and whole team meeting. There are clearly mapped procedures for monitoring any safeguarding concern within the setting, and the designated officers attend and cascade advanced level training to all staff. Managers closely monitor all staff actions and implement procedures that closely follow those required by the Local Safeguard Children Board and the requirements of their registration. This area of practice has been noticeably strengthened since the last inspection. As part of the safeguarding procedures there are extremely thorough recruitment and suitability checks which include a detailed induction and probationary period for new staff. As a result, the setting ensures that children are protected exceptionally well.

Staff create an environment that is stimulating where children engage in active learning. External doors are kept locked and they are only accessible to senior staff with the key pad code; parents ring the doorbell and are admitted by management. All parents and persons collecting children are issued with identity cards holding their photograph. There is a separate entrance for any visitors to the setting. These measures demonstrate the high regard that the setting has for the security and safety of the children. The setting benefits from the advice and inspection of a health and safety expert. They complete detailed risk assessments which cover all areas of the premises as well as any outings that take place. Facilities for those requiring additional support fully meet the legal requirements and acknowledge individual needs. Arrangements for staffing for children when they are sleeping are precise; children are fully supervised. Each day the management team make detailed records of all children and staff present. They organise staffing deployment carefully in order to meet the required ratios and, in addition, place extra staff in all areas to support the welfare of children. Management staff have a clear overview of what is taking place in all areas, at all times, through constant monitoring throughout the day. Hence, children's welfare and wellbeing is shown to be of the utmost priority.

High-quality professional supervision is provided, with sharply focused evaluations of the impact of staff's practice. This includes daily observations of practice by the management team, including one management member whose daily role includes support and dissemination of good practice. Every staff member takes part in a review appraisal every six weeks. These methods feed directly to a targeted programme of professional development for the already first-rate staff members. Parents become highly involved in the practice of the setting. For instance, there is regular electronic contact to keep them informed and seek their views, as well as the parent committee which meets regularly to review and assess current practice. Parents' evenings are held twice each year to review children's learning and development, alongside specific information evenings that focus on, for example, the Early Years Foundation Stage or the development of phonics. Parents provide their views to the setting every three months using questionnaires. As a result of these clearly embedded methods of working with parents, their feedback is added to the

fully used reflective practice that takes place. Central to this, is the action file that is reviewed every three months and is a result of the monitoring and review processes that take place. This has been introduced since the last inspection and adds to the highly improved practice that is in place. The close work with all other agencies involved with children, and other settings involved, means that children's needs are quickly identified and extremely well met. The dedication seen in reflecting on good practice and continuing to improve all aspects of the setting shows that there is a strong drive to maintain the high levels of achievements. Children are very secure, thoroughly enjoy their play and learning, and are confident and self-assured. Consequently, children embark on their learning career ready to seek out new experiences and learn.

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 action. 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	146469
Local authority	Hertfordshire
Inspection number	908879
Type of provision	
Registration category	Childcare - Non-Domestic
Age range of children	0 - 17
Total number of places	105
Number of children on roll	221
Name of provider	Wonderland Day Nursery Ltd
Date of previous inspection	15/04/2009
Telephone number	01462 480884

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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, which are usually the childminder's 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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