

Inspection of Bright Horizons Harpenden Central Day Nursery and Preschool

Peel House, 15 Vaughan Road, Harpenden, Hertfordshire AL5 4EL

Inspection date: 25 October 2022

Overall effectiveness	Outstanding
The quality of education	Outstanding
Behaviour and attitudes	Outstanding
Personal development	Outstanding
Leadership and management	Outstanding
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Good

What is it like to attend this early years setting?

The provision is outstanding

Children flourish at this friendly nursery. They are warmly welcomed by enthusiastic staff, who swiftly engage them in play. Children form exceptionally strong bonds with all staff. Those who progress to other rooms beam with delight when they see previous key staff. They wave at them excitedly and run into their arms. Children develop close friendships with each other. At nap time, they tuck blankets around one another and help staff soothe children to sleep by stroking their hair affectionately.

Children's communication and language skills are superbly supported throughout the nursery. Babies delight at the songs and rhymes that staff expertly introduce into their play. Pre-school children engage enthusiastically in inspirational story sessions. They choose imaginary characters and themes and develop their own narrative with support from highly skilled staff.

Children demonstrate exceptionally high levels of independence. Staff encourage children to complete age-appropriate tasks with minimal support. For example, toddlers place used tissues in the dustbin and wash their hands without prompting. Older children prepare snacks and serve their own meals. Children of all ages are highly skilled at using appropriate cutlery and pouring drinks at mealtimes. This prepares children well for the routines of school.

What does the early years setting do well and what does it need to do better?

- Management and staff are passionate about their role in supporting children's development. They closely monitor children's progress and are swift to identify when children may need additional support, including the most able children. Staff plan exciting activities based on children's interests. They extend and adapt them well to ensure they remain suitably challenging for all children. For example, children revisit an activity where they build tunnels out of pumpkins. Those who are uneasy about the texture of the flesh use spoons to scoop it out. Children count the seeds they have collected. They develop an understanding of more complex mathematical concepts by adding further seeds and then taking quantities away.
- Children of all ages are highly skilled at identifying and managing risks in their play. Staff use the nursery's safety mascot to support children's understanding of potential hazards. At mealtimes, young children explain that they use knives for pushing and cutting and do not put them in their mouths. Pre-school children take an active role in completing daily risk assessments of their environment. They consider the impact hazards could have on them and their friends.
- Management and staff reflect diligently on all areas of their practice. Recent changes to the pre-school area allow staff to place exceptional focus on ensuring

all children are well prepared for school, regardless of their current abilities. Diligent staff reflect well on their own abilities and take every opportunity to extend their learning. They embrace numerous training opportunities and share their knowledge with one another in regular meetings and social team-building sessions.

- Partnerships with parents are of an exceptionally high standard. The nursery has introduced an electronic diary system to share daily information about children's routines. Parents attend regular stay-and-play sessions to remain fully informed about their children's progress. Pre-school children take home weekly activities to explore with parents. These tasks are highly focused on the individual child and support their specific learning goals.
- Children demonstrate incredibly high levels of curiosity in their play. Staff encourage children to take the lead in activities. They support children's growing knowledge with high-quality interactions. For example, pre-school children make modelling dough. Staff encourage them to discuss what happens when they add water and paint to their mixture. Younger children create potions. They explore what happens when they add oil and other objects to their concoctions.
- Children's transitions through the nursery are exceptionally well supported. The skilled staff ensure children are confident in their abilities and familiar with their new environment before they move permanently. A highly effective key-person system ensures detailed information about each child is well communicated. This supports children to settle swiftly and continue to make excellent progress.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Management and staff demonstrate an exceptionally strong knowledge of the signs and symptoms that could indicate that a child is at risk of harm. They confidently explain the process to follow when they have concerns about the welfare of a child. The provider has robust recruitment procedures in place. This ensures that all staff are suitable to work with children. Management and staff complete regular first-aid and safeguarding training. This supports them in keeping their knowledge up to date with changes in legislation. Management and staff ensure the nursery is safe for children by completing regular risk assessments. They involve children in this process, which develops children's knowledge of managing risks.

Setting details

Unique reference number	EY289502
Local authority	Hertfordshire
Inspection number	10234839
Type of provision	Childcare on non-domestic premises
Registers	Early Years Register, Compulsory Childcare Register, Voluntary Childcare Register
Day care type	Full day care
Age range of children at time of inspection	0 to 4
Total number of places	57
Number of children on roll	55
Name of registered person	Bright Horizons Family Solutions Limited
Registered person unique reference number	RP901358
Telephone number	01582 283507
Date of previous inspection	16 February 2017

Information about this early years setting

Bright Horizons Harpenden Central Day Nursery and Preschool registered in 2004. The nursery employs 19 members of childcare staff. Of these, 14 hold appropriate early years qualifications at level 3 or above. The nursery opens from Monday to Friday, all year round. Sessions are from 7.30am until 6.30pm. It provides funded early education for two-, three- and four-year-old children.

Information about this inspection

Inspector

Antonia Campbell

Inspection activities

- This was the first routine inspection the provider received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. The inspector discussed the impact of the pandemic with the provider and has taken that into account in their evaluation of the provider.
- Several parents shared their views of the setting with the inspector.
- The manager showed the inspector relevant documents, including evidence of the suitability of all staff.
- The inspector observed the interactions between staff and children during activities.
- The inspector observed the quality of teaching to assess the impact on children's learning.
- The manager and inspector completed a joint observation of an activity to assess the quality of teaching.
- The inspector held discussions with the manager and staff about the monitoring of learning and development in the setting and tracked the progress of several children.

We carried out this inspection 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.

If you are not happy with the inspection or the report, you can [complain to Ofsted](#).

The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) regulates and inspects to achieve excellence in the care of children and young people, and in education and skills for learners of all ages. It regulates and inspects childcare and children's social care, and inspects the Children and Family Court Advisory and Support Service (Cafcass), schools, colleges, initial teacher training, further education and skills, adult and community learning, and education and training in prisons and other secure establishments. It assesses council children's services, and inspects services for looked after children, safeguarding and child protection.

If you would like a copy of this document in a different format, such as large print or Braille, please telephone 0300 123 1231, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.

You may reuse this information (not including logos) free of charge in any format or medium, under the terms of the Open Government Licence. To view this licence, visit www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/doc/open-government-licence/, write to the Information Policy Team, The National Archives, Kew, London TW9 4DU, or email: psi@nationalarchives.gsi.gov.uk

This publication is available at <https://reports.ofsted.gov.uk/>.

Interested in our work? You can subscribe to our monthly newsletter for more information and updates: <http://eepurl.com/iTrDn>.

Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

T: 0300 123 1231
Textphone: 0161 618 8524
E: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
W: www.gov.uk/ofsted

© Crown copyright 2022