

Houghton Conquest Early Years

School House, High Street, Houghton Conquest, BEDFORD, MK45 3LL

Inspection date	07/03/2013
Previous inspection date	10/10/2008

The quality and standards of the early years provision	This inspection:	1
	Previous inspection:	3
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 make excellent progress because of the meticulous observation and planning staff undertake. This is highly effective in moving them forward in their learning and development.
- Children are highly capable and willing to have a go at activities. They use their own ideas because of the freedom they are given to explore and create.
- Children enjoy spending time at the pre-school. There is a clear and highly effective key person system that helps children to forge extremely close bonds with staff. This helps them to settle very well.
- Children behave extremely well and show concern and care for each other. This is because of the genuine care they are shown by staff, who are highly attentive to their needs.
- Staff are highly motivated to continue to bring about improvements in the quality of care provided for children. They strive for excellence at all times and are ambitious in continuing to seek opportunities to strengthen practice.
- Parents are actively involved in all aspects of the pre-school and share their views readily. Staff respond by adapting and trialling new ways of working to accommodate their ideas.

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 spoke with parents and children to gather their views.
- The inspector held meetings with the Senior Early Years Practitioner and registered person.
- A joint observation was held with the Senior Early Years Practitioner to observe children at play in the outdoor area.
- Children's progress files were viewed in order to establish the progress they make in their learning.

Inspector

Hayley Marshall

Full Report

Information about the setting

Houghton Conquest Early Years Centre opened in 2008 under the name Kingswood Family Centre and Bluebells. It is registered on the Early Years register and both the voluntary and compulsory parts of the Childcare Register. It operates from a self-contained building in the grounds of Houghton Conquest Lower School in Houghton Conquest in Bedfordshire. It is managed by the governing body of the school. Children have access to a fully enclosed outdoor play area. The pre-school opens at 9am until 12pm and 1pm until 4pm, term time only. There is an option of a lunch club from 12pm to 1pm daily. There are currently 45 children attending aged between two years and five years of age. Some children aged two-, three- and four-years receive funding for free early education. Children attend from the local village and further afield.

There are four permanent staff members. One member of staff has a relevant early years degree, further staff have level 3 qualification or are working towards level 2 qualifications in childcare.

What the setting needs to do to improve further

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

- increase further children's excellent sense of independence by ensuring that wellington boots are organised so children can quickly put them on when they wish to play outside.

Inspection judgements

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

The excellent observation, tracking and monitoring of children means that staff are highly accurate in identifying their individual levels of learning and development. Staff use this information to plan activities for children which engage and challenge them. Consequently, all children make significant gains in all areas of development as a result of attending the pre-school. Staff are highly skilled practitioners who know exactly how to support children. When children need help, staff intervene and guide them, allowing them to make small achievements. At other times, staff step back and allow children to try for themselves. For example, children make cards, drawing pictures and writing inside. They make plausible attempts at forming letters and are keenly interested in words. Staff then write further words for children to copy. Children can copy words they see in their environment by typing them on a keypad of a computer. They say the sound of each letter and recognise familiar letters that are contained in their names. Staff support this by providing an environment that is rich in print and ensuring there are ample resources for children to

make marks and draw. The excellent learning is extended in the outdoor area where children use chalks, crayons and paintbrushes. Children engage in physical play that involves them in jumping, climbing and lifting. Children role play builders and move bricks and planks as they construct and build. They jump into large tyres and move equipment around, demonstrating their exceptional physical skills.

Children know the purpose of numbers as staff encourage counting through everyday activities, such as cooking. Children count out how many spoons they need and test weight and quantity. This helps them to understand mathematical language and to gain an understanding of more and less.

Children are extremely sociable and friendly towards each other. They show a sense of community as they show affection and concern for their peers. Children express articulately that all toys in the pre-school belong to everyone and that they must share. This helps all children to play together harmoniously, and to express themselves freely. Children gain exceptional levels of confidence because of the praise, encouragement and support staff give them. They are highly motivated to learn and show a thirst for knowledge as they question and explore everything on offer. This shows that children are acquiring the necessary skills they will need to support them as they move into their future learning.

Parents have high involvement in children's learning. Staff actively encourage them to fill out information sheets on a termly basis discussing what children have learnt and enjoy doing at home. Staff use this information in their planning. For example, staff provide hairdressing role play in response to children having their hair cut at the weekend. Children show their excitement at this activity and wait in a line for their turn at the 'hairdressers'. This close working and effective sharing of information means that there is continuation in children's learning as they follow their own interests.

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

Staff build extremely close relationships with children. The key person system is easily understood by parents and children and is highly effective in helping children to settle. Children know who their special person is and parents can identify them because there is a photograph board and colour code system. This means that parents know who to speak to should they want to further discuss their children's progress. As a result of the genuine care and attention staff show children, they demonstrate the same care and attention themselves to each other. This creates an environment where children behave extremely well and settle very quickly. Children play together sharing resources and encouraging each other to join in. They are aware of safety, while playing in a robust nature, as they test themselves and what they can do. For example, children increase in speed on bikes while playing in the garden and then stop safely and dismount.

Children are independent because of the ample opportunities they are given to make choices for themselves. Toys and equipment are all within easy reach in a room that allows children to move freely. Space allows children to take toys, such as jigsaw puzzles,

and spread them out on the floor. Children dress themselves when they choose to play outdoors by putting their coats on. They look at the bottom of their shoes to see what size wellington boots they need. Children can then choose wellingtons from a box. There is scope to make this easier for children by organising wellington boots so children can find pairs and their correct size more easily.

Children eat a nutritious snack that is suitable for their individual diet. Staff know those children that have restrictions upon what they can eat and find alternatives so that they can participate in all activities. Children develop positive attitudes towards exercise as they play outdoors in all weathers.

Parents share important developments in children's progress, such as toilet training, and staff work closely with them to support this. Close working with local schools, and relationships with individual teachers who regularly visit the pre-school, support children as they move into school and prepare them for the change.

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

Staff have an excellent awareness of issues relating to children's safety. They conduct assessments of the environment to identify any potential risks to children. Staff extend upon this assessment by evaluating minor accidents that occur. By looking at records they observe any patterns or trends and take action to reduce any perceived risk further. Staff have a superb understanding of child protection because they engage in regular training to widen their knowledge. This means that all staff can identify the signs and symptoms that might cause them concern about children's well-being and the appropriate action they must take. All those who attend the pre-school, including visitors, understand the procedures to prevent risks that using technology may pose to children. Mobile phones are not permitted in the pre-school and staff use photography securely with permission from parents.

Highly supportive staff monitoring means that underperformance is tackled decisively. The Senior Early Years Practitioner mentors staff to ensure that the team share the same extremely high standards. This creates smooth running amongst the staff team and high ambition to further improve the quality of care for children. All staff strive for excellence, they address areas of weakness and further build upon strengths. This means that ongoing improvement is consistent and standards are exceptionally high.

The educational programme is highly effective as staff monitor planning and children's progress in a meticulous manner. Staff complete the Early Years Foundation Stage progress check at age two using the information they gather. Children make superb progress because staff have high expectations for them.

Staff work together with speech therapy practitioners to support children's early communication and language. This programme identifies when children need extra support. Early identification of difficulties results in all children making excellent progress

in relation to their age and stage of development. Very good relationships are in place with other settings children attend, which ensures continuity of learning and care.

The pre-school welcomes parents into the setting. They attend for special occasions, such as a Mother's Day party and enjoy participating in shared activities. Parent consultations are held during the day after parent's suggestion. This allows them to find out about children's progress in a relaxed way as they look in detail at the pre-school environment and discuss children's progress with staff. Parents feel very happy with the care children receive and feel that staff do a 'fantastic' job in caring for children.

The Childcare Register

The requirements for the compulsory part of the Childcare Register are	Met
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The requirements for the voluntary part of the Childcare Register are	Met
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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	EY365872
Local authority	Central Bedfordshire
Inspection number	878522
Type of provision	
Registration category	Childcare - Non-Domestic
Age range of children	0 - 17
Total number of places	36
Number of children on roll	45
Name of provider	Houghton Conquest Lower School Governing Body
Date of previous inspection	10/10/2008
Telephone number	01234 743173

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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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