

Inspection of Hickory Dickorys Day Nursery Ltd

19 Cambray Place, Cheltenham GL50 1JS

Inspection date: 24 September 2025

Overall effectiveness	Good
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The quality of education	Good
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Behaviour and attitudes	Good
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Personal development	Good
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Leadership and management	Good
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Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Good
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What is it like to attend this early years setting?

The provision is good

Children arrive at the nursery happy and are greeted by a familiar, friendly staff team who know them and their families well. Staff label each child's coat peg with their photograph and name, including their home language. This helps children recognise their name and feel a sense of identity and belonging. Children settle quickly and are eager to play and learn. They benefit from a broad and balanced curriculum carefully planned by staff that supports their progress in all areas of learning.

Babies explore autumn-themed activities. They develop core strength as they sit in trays and reach for leaves and conkers. Staff name the objects and point to pictures, introducing words such as 'harvester'. This helps babies develop early communication skills and curiosity. Toddlers focus and concentrate during small-group activities led by staff. They recall familiar stories, name foods and count props. Staff encourage turn-taking, listening and respect for others, helping toddlers develop positive behaviour and social skills. Pre-school children learn about community helpers through imaginative role play. They dress as doctors and nurses and show care and empathy while tending to dolls. Staff explain how tools such as stethoscopes and blood pressure monitors work. Children explore, problem-solve and learn about the world around them. They share resources, cooperate and take responsibility, which strengthens their personal development and prepares them for school.

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

- Leaders and staff work together to create a varied curriculum that helps children make progress and be prepared for the next stage in their learning. They provide a wide range of activities and resources to support this. However, they do not always have clear enough learning intentions for individual children or the group activities on offer. For example, at times, intentions are broad, such as 'communication and language', rather than identifying what skills they want children to develop. This makes it harder for staff to focus their interactions to help children make the best possible progress.
- Leaders enrich opportunities in the curriculum, recognising gaps and addressing these. For example, acknowledging their smaller outdoor space, they make provision for staff to take children on outings into the community and have used donations to install a climbing wall to promote children's physical development, strength and resilience.
- The nursery has a range of inclusive strategies to support children's communication and language skills. For example, they have visual aids such as 'now and next' boards, sign language and key words in children's home language displayed in the rooms. While these strategies are in place, staff do not

always use them consistently and they are not fully embedded in everyday practice, to fully promote children's confidence and progress in communication and language development.

- Children enjoy a wide range of healthy and balanced meals and snacks. A full-time chef prepares the food and checks menus against the latest nutrition guidance. Staff promote allergen awareness, serving meals for children with allergies on coloured plates. They ask children for their views and encourage them to vote on new recipes. Mealtimes are purposeful learning experiences. Children collect their plates, serve themselves and pour their own drinks. They grow in independence and learn to care for themselves.
- Partnerships with parents are a strength of the nursery. Staff build these from the very start of children's attendance. They invite parents to flexible settling-in sessions and gather information that helps them get to know each child. This means staff can plan for children's needs from the outset. Parent feedback is consistently positive. They describe staff as 'attentive' and 'nurturing' and say they feel listened to and included in their child's learning journey.
- Leaders work closely with staff and regularly monitor practice, being present in all areas of nursery life. Staff feel supported both personally and professionally, which keeps morale high and helps them provide high-quality care and teaching. Leaders are introducing personal development plans for all staff. These recognise each person's strengths and areas for development. Leaders aim to use these plans to guide further training and support. This will help staff continue to grow in their roles and further improve the quality of teaching and learning for all children across the nursery.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

There is an open and positive culture around safeguarding that puts children's interests first.

What does the setting need to do to improve?

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

- support staff to set more precise learning intentions to focus their interactions more effectively and help children make the best possible progress
- embed the use of inclusive strategies to fully promote children's confidence and progress in communication and language.

Setting details

Unique reference number	EY471709
Local authority	Gloucestershire
Inspection number	10407945
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	40
Number of children on roll	77
Name of registered person	Hickory Dickorys Day Nursery Limited
Registered person unique reference number	RP903278
Telephone number	01242 574362
Date of previous inspection	22 January 2020

Information about this early years setting

Hickory Dickorys Day Nursery Ltd re-registered in 2013 and is situated in Cheltenham, Gloucestershire. It is open each weekday from 8am to 6pm for 51 weeks of the year. The nursery provides funded early education for children aged nine months to four years. The nursery employs 14 members of staff. Of these, three hold relevant early years qualifications at level 6 and eight at level 3. There are three further staff who are completing an apprenticeship and working towards their early years qualification.

Information about this inspection

Inspector
Holly Smith

Inspection activities

- The inspector completed a learning walk together with leaders to view all areas of the nursery and discuss the early years curriculum.
- The inspector observed the quality of education being provided, indoors and outdoors, and assessed the impact that this was having on children's learning.
- The inspector carried out a joint observation of a group activity with the nominated individual.
- The inspector spoke to several parents during the inspection and took account of their views.
- The inspector talked to staff at appropriate times during the inspection and took account of their views.
- The inspector looked at relevant documentation and reviewed evidence of the suitability of staff working in the nursery.

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.

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