

Mini Cowpers

Hertingfordbury Cowper Primary School, Birch Green, Hertford, Hertfordshire, SG14 2LR



Inspection date

Previous inspection date

4 July 2016

15 July 2011

The quality and standards of the early years provision	This inspection:	Outstanding	1
	Previous inspection:	Good	2
Effectiveness of the leadership and management		Outstanding	1
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment		Outstanding	1
Personal development, behaviour and welfare		Outstanding	1
Outcomes for children		Outstanding	1

Summary of key findings for parents

This provision is outstanding

- The management team and staff are relentless in their pursuit of excellence with ambitious plans for the future. They use incisive self-evaluation as a powerful tool for improvement. Staff record what children say in speech bubbles displayed around the room and they analyse these to continually provide even higher levels of expert professional care and learning.
- Staff have a superb understanding of how children learn. Their meticulous observations and assessments help them to provide highly stimulating activities that are extremely focused on the individual needs and interests of each child. Children use the internet to research space expeditions and watch live coverage of astronauts returning to earth after their mission.
- Children thrive and are very happy and confident. The strong skills of all key persons ensure that children form very warm and caring bonds with them from an early stage. Children make a seamless move on to nursery and school when the time comes. They make regular visits with their key person and positively enjoy sharing a photograph book of their new environments.
- The well-qualified manager and staff team are inspirational. They have a real thirst to continue to extend their knowledge and skills. Visits to other pre-schools and regular reflection of each other's practice help to extend their already excellent teaching skills even further. Robust supervision meetings and excellent training opportunities are thoroughly effective and embedded.
- Staff provide children with a vibrant and welcoming learning environment, both indoors and outdoors. Children have a vast selection of resources that are superbly organised to support them in making informed and independent choices.

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 innovative ways to extend upon the excellent information from all parents about their children's learning and development at home.

Inspection activities

- The inspector observed the quality of teaching during activities indoors and outdoors, and assessed the impact this has on children's learning.
- The inspector completed a joint observation with the manager.
- The inspector held a meeting with the manager and chairperson of the committee. She looked at relevant documentation, such as the pre-school's self-evaluation and children's development records.
- The inspector viewed evidence of the suitability of committee members and staff working in the pre-school.
- The inspector spoke to a selection of parents during the inspection and took account of their views.

Inspector

Lorraine Pike

Inspection findings

Effectiveness of the leadership and management is outstanding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective. The staff take their roles and responsibilities very seriously. They closely monitor children's absences in line with new legislation. In addition, they have a robust knowledge of the action to take if they have concerns about a child's welfare. All staff form strong partnerships with parents. They keep them fully informed of their children's progress at every stage. Parents describe the staff as 'very professional'. Staff are currently exploring further innovative opportunities to extend upon the excellent information from all parents about their children's learning and development at home, in order to help inform their precise planning.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment is outstanding

Children are highly motivated and very eager to learn. They thoroughly enjoy innovative activities. For example, staff help children to wrap their feet in bubble wrap. Children dip their feet into paint and walk along large pieces of paper. This helps them to experiment making large patterns and marks. Children solve complex mathematical problems, such as subtraction. They make accurate predictions as they measure the correct quantities of salt and flour to make strawberry-scented dough. Staff know precisely when to intervene in children's play to support and extend their learning. They promote children's communication and language development superbly. Wonderful first-hand experiences, such as organised visits from a varied range of emergency services, help children to learn about the important role they fulfil to help others. Rich, varied and imaginative ideas stimulate children to share their understanding of people, families and communities beyond their immediate experience. Children develop outstanding literacy skills. They recognise and write their own name and have fun learning to link letters and sounds. Children are inspired to join in with exciting interactive stories that staff make come alive.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare are outstanding

Children behave exceptionally well and spontaneously use impeccable manners. Group time is a very positive experience for all children. They demonstrate secure friendships and great pleasure in singing a welcome song to each other. At the same time, they also develop excellent coordination using their hands to following a complex clapping sequence. Staff teach children excellent hygiene routines and the importance of a healthy lifestyle. Children make their own assessments about the appropriate clothing required before going outside. They know why they must wear a hat to protect them from the sun. Children have superb opportunities to take part in a very wide variety of physical activities. Immense fun is had by all as they act out familiar stories in the host school's woodland area and participate in an annual sports day.

Outcomes for children are outstanding

All children make rapid progress from their individual starting points. They are highly capable and expert problem solvers. The well-organised manager's sharp focus on monitoring children's individual progress and different groups of children identifies any gaps as soon as they emerge. Excellent individual and highly effective plans are swiftly implemented to help children continue to develop the key skills for school.

Setting details

Unique reference number	EY292484
Local authority	Hertfordshire
Inspection number	861435
Type of provision	Full-time provision
Day care type	Childcare - Non-Domestic
Registers	Early Years Register, Compulsory Childcare Register, Voluntary Childcare Register
Age range of children	2 - 7
Total number of places	23
Number of children on roll	71
Name of registered person	Hertingfordbury Cowper Preschool Committee
Registered person unique reference number	RP524872
Date of previous inspection	15 July 2011
Telephone number	07763351165

Mini Cowpers was registered in 2004. It operates from a single-storey building in the grounds of Hertingfordbury Cowper Primary School and is managed by a voluntary committee. The pre-school employs four members of childcare staff, all of whom hold a qualification at level 3 or above. This includes the manager who holds level 6. The pre-school opens from Monday to Friday during term time only. Breakfast club sessions are from 8.15am until 9am. Pre-school sessions operate from 9am until 3pm, Monday to Wednesday, 9am until 1pm on Thursday and 9am until midday on Friday. The pre-school provides funded early education for two- and three-year-old children.

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