

# Cotton Socks Day Nursery

Inspection report for early years provision

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**Unique reference number** EY287323  
**Inspection date** 04/02/2010  
**Inspector** Sarah Fletcher

**Setting address** Cotton Socks, 13-15 George Street, Aylesbury,  
Buckinghamshire, HP20 2HU

**Telephone number** 01296 339696

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**Type of setting** Childcare on non-domestic premises

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## Introduction

This inspection was carried out by Ofsted under Sections 49 and 50 of the Childcare Act 2006 on the quality and standards of the registered early years provision. 'Early years provision' refers to provision regulated by Ofsted for children from birth to 31 August following their fifth birthday (the early years age group). The registered person must ensure that this provision complies with the statutory framework for children's learning, development and welfare, known as the *Early Years Foundation Stage*.

The provider must provide a copy of this report to all parents with children at the setting where reasonably practicable. The provider must provide a copy of the report to any other person who asks for one, but may charge a fee for this service (The Childcare (Inspection) Regulations 2008 regulations 9 and 10).

The setting also makes provision for children older than the early years age group which is registered on the voluntary and/or compulsory part(s) of the Childcare Register. This report does not include an evaluation of that provision, but a comment about compliance with the requirements of the Childcare Register is included in Annex B.

Please see our website for more information about each childcare provider. We publish inspection reports, conditions of registration and details of complaints we receive where we or the provider take action to meet the requirements of registration.

## Description of the setting

Cotton Socks Day Nursery is one of a group of nurseries privately owned by Sunhill Day Care Limited. The nursery has operated from its current premises for over 10 years and has been registered with the present owners since 2004. The accommodation is spread over three floors of a converted office building in the centre of Aylesbury, with a small outside play area. The nursery is registered on the Early Years Register to care for up to 100 children in the early years age range. It is also registered on both the compulsory and voluntary parts of the Childcare Register. There are currently 59 children in the early years age range on roll.

The nursery is in receipt of funding for the provision of free early education for children aged three and four years, opening on weekdays all year round from 7.30am until 6.30pm, and offering a variety of sessions. The nursery supports a number of children who have special educational needs and/or disabilities, together with several children for whom English is an additional language. The nursery employs 14 staff to work directly with the children and of these, 11 hold appropriate early years qualifications, with three qualified staff currently attending further training.

## The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is satisfactory.

Staff meet children's needs routinely and provide a relaxing and friendly environment where they can play and learn together. Children are mostly safeguarded appropriately and benefit from the two-way communication system which develops effectively between staff and parents, providing a good range of appropriate information and daily discussions on arrival and collection to maintain continuity. Staff offer appropriate support to all children and help them feel welcome, regardless of their family background, race or gender. They are very keen to improve the quality of children's care and learning and are taking positive steps towards improvement through self-evaluation.

## What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

To further improve the early years provision the registered person should:

- extend systems for observation and assessment of children's progress to demonstrate clear evaluation of their achievements and links to the appropriate areas of learning
- develop planning systems further to demonstrate children's individual next steps towards the early learning goals and how activities can be adapted for more or less able children
- improve systems for checking everyday hazards to children, particularly the pushchair storage area children need to pass through on their way to the garden

- develop the systems for assessing and recording risks and hazards to children further to promote their safety efficiently at all times
- improve the system for recording complaints further to ensure each investigation is recorded under the appropriate area of the Early Years Foundation Stage framework.

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

Staff safeguard children appropriately as they maintain ratios carefully and use effective recruitment and vetting systems to ensure the suitability of adults looking after children. They operate appropriate entry systems to protect children from unvetted adults and maintain daily checks to promote their safety, allowing children freedom to move around in a secure environment. Most areas of the premises are child friendly, with the recent addition of wooden stairgates between different floors preventing children's unsupervised access to other areas. However, the route children take to the garden under supervision is not always clear of hazardous obstacles, such as parents' pushchairs. Staff are beginning to create a range of risk assessments to reduce potential hazards and dangers to areas children access, indoors and outside. However, the current system does not clearly identify the potential risks and hazards within each area, or demonstrate the steps that have been taken to make the areas safe to promote children's safety efficiently at all times. Staff have a developing understanding of protecting children from harm, which they have mainly gained through their qualifications, although some staff have acquired a secure knowledge through recent training courses to promote outcomes for safeguarding children more effectively.

Children's quality of care benefits from clearly written policies and procedures, which are known to staff and shared with parents. Records for individual children are suitably maintained and parents provide written permissions routinely at registration. Attendance of children and staff is recorded accurately and information regarding children's accidents is shared with parents in confidence. However, the system for recording complaints does not currently ensure each investigation is recorded under the appropriate area of the Early Years Foundation Stage framework. Parents are supportive of the nursery and are happy with the care and learning their children receive. Information about nursery practice and routines is easily visible around the rooms and entrance hall, together with quality information on the Early Years Foundation Stage. Regular newsletters and daily diary sheets provide parents with a detailed view of their child's time in the nursery. Management and staff assess their practice together through a system of self-evaluation towards improvement, using additional support and guidance from their Early Years advisors and valuing parental feedback. Together they are addressing all areas currently identified for development and are continuing to use this process towards future improvement.

Children are able to select from a wide range of quality toys, resources and equipment to aid their learning and development. New children are welcomed and settle with relative ease, as they get to know key staff and their peers. Qualified staff are able to access appropriate support from professionals as required to aid

individual children's developing needs, attending further training to extend their knowledge. Children attend from different family backgrounds and cultures, mixing well with their peers. Staff try to ensure they recognise and value children's differences and display information from children's varying languages. Children are asked to bring in items that represent their country which are added to family displays across the nursery. They all access a developing selection of resources to learn about the wider world and learn about other cultures through their play and communications. The nursery sponsors a child from Sudan and letters and photographs received are on display in the entrance hall to provide children with information about the child's life and enable them to learn about the wider world.

## **The quality and standards of the early years provision and outcomes for children**

Older children are aware of simple hygiene routines, using the bathroom and tissues as necessary, with staff giving gentle reminders for hand washing before snacks and meals to avoid cross infection. Babies and young children have their faces and hands cleaned before and after food and older children use individual flannels to clean their faces independently after meals. Food and drink is consumed socially as children sit around tables and chat with staff and peers about their lives and families. Meals and snacks offer a range of healthy choices, with all children having regular access to fresh drinking water throughout the day. Parents are consulted about their child's dietary requirements or preferences and records are on display to ensure each child receives the appropriate meals. As young children sleep, they are carefully monitored while they rest in separate cots or on individual mattresses, with bedding regularly washed to prevent the spread of infection. Staff's daily routines ensure all resources and areas children access are clean and well maintained. For example, toys and resources are regularly sterilized, fridges are cleaned routinely and temperatures checked daily for efficiency, and all staff follow clear nappy changing routines to meet individual children's needs and prevent cross infection.

Records show children are beginning to make visible progress in their learning and development, receiving positive praise for all their efforts and achievements. Staff are beginning to implement the Early Years Foundation Stage framework appropriately and make observations of children at play. However, the systems currently in use for observation and assessment of children's progress do not always demonstrate clear evaluation of their achievements or link to the appropriate areas of learning. Planning systems are based on children's individual interests gathered from their keyperson's general observations. Activities are then designed to accommodate children's changing development, following age appropriate learning outcomes. However, current planning systems do not always demonstrate children's individual next steps towards the early learning goals or show how activities can be adapted for more or less able children.

All children have daily experiences for outside play in the secure outdoor area, which provides them with opportunities to develop their physical skills and take part in gardening and exploration activities. Available space allows children the freedom to move around and use the play equipment as they choose, or to play

quietly alone or with friends. Staff are on hand to support them as they play or join in with activities, forming positive relationships with both adults and their peers. Walks around the locality provide children with an understanding of their neighbourhood and an introduction to safety issues when out and about. Staff ensure they supervise children carefully and help them learn to keep themselves safe by explaining road safety guidelines when walking near traffic.

## Annex A: record of inspection judgements

### The key inspection judgements and what they mean

*Grade 1 is Outstanding: this aspect of the provision is of exceptionally high quality*

*Grade 2 is Good: this aspect of the provision is strong*

*Grade 3 is Satisfactory: this aspect of the provision is sound*

*Grade 4 is Inadequate: this aspect of the provision is not good enough*

### The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

<b>How well does the setting meet the needs of the children in the Early Years Foundation Stage?</b>	3
The capacity of the provision to maintain continuous improvement	2

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

<b>How effectively is the Early Years Foundation Stage led and managed?</b>	3
The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement	2
The effectiveness with which the setting deploys resources	3
The effectiveness with which the setting promotes equality and diversity	3
The effectiveness of safeguarding	3
The effectiveness of the setting's self-evaluation, including the steps taken to promote improvement	3
The effectiveness of partnerships	3
The effectiveness of the setting's engagement with parents and carers	2

### The quality of the provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage

The quality of the provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage	3
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### Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage

<b>Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage</b>	3
The extent to which children achieve and enjoy their learning	3
The extent to which children feel safe	3
The extent to which children adopt healthy lifestyles	2
The extent to which children make a positive contribution	3
The extent to which children develop skills for the future	3

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## **Annex B: the Childcare Register**

The provider confirms that the requirements of the compulsory part of the Childcare Register are: Met

The provider confirms that the requirements of the voluntary part of the Childcare Register are: Met