

University of Essex Day Nursery

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique reference number EY414291
Inspection date 22/11/2010
Inspector Lynn A Hartigan

Setting address University of Essex, Wivenhoe Park, COLCHESTER, CO4
3SQ
Telephone number 01206 873224
Email edixon@essex.ac.uk
Type of setting Childcare on non-domestic premises

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 Support Service (Cafcass), schools, colleges, initial teacher training, work-based learning and skills training, 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 copy all or parts of this document for non-commercial educational purposes, as long as you give details of the source and date of publication and do not alter the information in any way.

T: 0300 123 1231

Textphone: 0161 618 8524

E: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk

W: www.ofsted.gov.uk

© Crown copyright 2010

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

University of Essex Day Nursery has been registered since 2010, however this is an established setting that registered in 1978. The setting operates from a purpose built nursery within the grounds of Essex University, in Wivenhoe. There are large enclosed gardens available for outdoor play.

The nursery is registered to care for 121 children at any one time, aged from birth to five years. The provision is registered on the Early Years Register. The nursery also offers a holiday club for children aged up to eleven years. The setting is registered on the compulsory part of the Childcare Register. The setting is open throughout the year, with the exception of a week at Christmas.

The nursery opens each weekday from 8am until 6pm, offering three sessions in addition to full day care. There are strategies in place to support children with special educational needs and/or disabilities and children learning English as an additional language.

The nursery employ 48 members of staff, including the manager, of whom 44 have appropriate early years qualifications.

The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is good.

This setting is good and ensures children progress well through the Early Years Foundation Stage. The provision for the children's emotional well-being is also good, with some outstanding outcomes for children. Children are happy and settled as a dedicated staff team ensure their individual needs are supported. Good opportunities are in place to communicate with parents and effective partnership enhances the children's time at nursery. Staff value children's uniqueness and emphasis is given to inclusion to ensure their individual needs are supported. Some good systems are in place for self-evaluation and continuous improvements that include the views of children, parents and staff.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

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

- continue to further develop the organisation and planning of the outdoor learning environment. To provide more opportunities to initiate their own play and follow their own interests.

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

Robust procedures are in place for recruitment, induction and appraisals, ensuring all adults working at the nursery are suitable to do so. The majority of staff have worked at the nursery for many years, and as a result, children receive continuity of care. A safeguarding policy is clearly understood by all staff members and ensures children's well-being is not compromised. It is an expectation that all staff members complete training with regard to safeguarding. The premises are secure and all visitors have to wait for entry, report to reception and sign a visitors book. Fire drills are practised regularly.

The manager and deputies are committed and dedicated to provide high quality childcare and education and have clear plans for the future of the setting. This includes developing the outdoor play space and updating policies and risk assessments. They are supported by their staff team who feel valued and encouraged to progress in their own personal development. Staff appear enthusiastic and are embracing changes and new ideas to further develop the nursery. For example, the introduction of flexible routines that enable children to become more independent and initiate their own play, in particular the introduction of providing opportunities for learning in the outdoor environment.

Staff consistently work hard to ensure communication systems for parents and carers are accessible. Questionnaires for parents are now offered annually to seek their views of the service provided. Policies are available in several languages if required. Parents are welcomed into the nursery and chat informally with regard to their children's day. Parents of babies and toddlers are offered daily feedback sheets. Spoken references from parents indicate that they are very happy with every aspect of the care offered to their children.

Good risk assessments completed daily ensure the environment and activities remain safe for children. Procedures now in place to regularly review this process ensure they are effective and children's safety is not compromised. Children learn about keeping themselves safe through supervised activities and project work. The staff team have good links with outside agencies and other settings, however these are in the early stages and continue to be developed.

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

Children play in exceptionally welcoming, clean, bright playrooms that have access to a secure outdoor play area. Some rooms use the outdoor environment extremely well and children delight in their time outdoors. They dig for worms and watch them wriggle around in fascination, observing the worms through magnifying glasses. They proudly show ladybirds they find and listen carefully as staff members explain how to look after them. Children paint outdoors and enjoy playing with sand and trays of shredded paper.

Children learn to grow and care for their own vegetables that they pick and taste for snacks. They proudly show their scarecrow and discuss its purpose. They are fascinated when they find a potato that has been left behind and suggest they have it for lunch. Staff engage the children in meaningful discussions about healthy eating, the importance of fresh air and exercise and how these contribute to staying healthy. Children's health and welfare is promoted exceptionally well. Individual dietary needs and allergies are catered for within the provision of healthy snacks and meals as robust strategies in place ensure these are met. Children enjoy pears and milk for snack and sit in small groups as this is regarded as a social time where children relax and engage in conversation.

Staff are excellent role models and speak to the children with respect and kind positive language; as a result, children's behaviour is very good. Children appear very caring, for example, they hug each other and apologise without prompting if they accidentally hurt their friends. Children's confidence and self-esteem is developed through the settings consistent and thorough approach to behaviour management.

Children clearly enjoy their time at nursery and happily leave their parents and engage in activities of their choice and some children are reluctant to leave when it is home time. Superb selections of very good resources are available to the children who are able to self-select. This includes a high staff ratio and, as a result, children receive excellent care and attention.

There are defined areas within the rooms, such as, creative and imaginative areas, and cosy book corners. Equal attention is given to all six areas of learning and all staff have an excellent understanding of child development and how children learn. The continuous evaluation of the planning system ensures processes now in place effectively meet and support the children's unique developmental needs. Planning is completed as the day progresses as children spontaneously direct their own learning, supported by skilful staff who are intuitive of the children's developmental stages.

Extensive evaluation of activities and observations made are used to inform the flexible planning. As a result, children are progressing exceptionally well and are inquisitive and eager learners. Beautiful photographs of the children at work are displayed throughout the nursery, creating a real sense of belonging. Babies are cared for by staff who value parents comments and views. Working in close partnership with the parents ensures their individual routines are supported to the highest standard. Babies enjoy cuddles and are pleased to see the staff when they wake from a sleep. Babies are encouraged to make early attempts at feeding as they are offered spoons and feeder cups, encouraging independence. However staff are on hand to assist at all times and the babies clearly enjoy their chopped or pureed stew and vegetables at mealtimes.

The nursery has an extensive equal opportunities and diversity policy that supports their practices. All policies are translated into different languages as required or a translator is sourced to ensure all parents are fully informed of the settings practices. Children are able to learn about the wider world as they celebrate different cultures and traditional days. These are incorporated within the planning.

Children attend from many different countries and many are learning English as an additional language. They receive excellent support as robust strategies are in place to support their development. For example, the introduction of Makaton enables any child with limited language to communicate. Visual prompts are available throughout the setting and staff work closely with the parents and carers. The provision of some excellent toys and resources that represent diversity enables children to have an understanding and embrace differences.

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

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

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement	2
The effectiveness with which the setting deploys resources	2
The effectiveness with which the setting promotes equality and diversity	2
The effectiveness of safeguarding	2
The effectiveness of the setting's self-evaluation, including the steps taken to promote improvement	2
The effectiveness of partnerships	2
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	2
--	---

Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage

Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
The extent to which children achieve and enjoy their learning	1
The extent to which children feel safe	1
The extent to which children adopt healthy lifestyles	1
The extent to which children make a positive contribution	2
The extent to which children develop skills for the future	1

Any complaints about the inspection or report should be made following the procedures set out in the guidance available from Ofsted's website: www.ofsted.gov.uk

Annex B: the Childcare Register

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

Met