

Solid Start Day Nursery

Inspection report for early years provision

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Inspection date

11/10/2011

Inspector

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Type of setting

Childcare - Non-Domestic

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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.

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Description of the setting

Solid Start Day Nursery and Pre-School have been registered since 2011. The nursery operates from converted premises within Chelmer Village in Chelmsford, Essex.

The nursery is registered to care for 38 children at any one time, aged from birth to five years. There are currently 31 children on roll. The nursery opens each week day, all year round with the exception of bank holidays. The nursery opens from 7am until 7pm, offering both full day care and sessional care, six days a week. The setting also offers a breakfast club from 7am until 8.45am and an after school club from 3.30pm until 6pm. A holiday club also operates during school holidays, offering care to children aged from four to 10 years.

The provision is registered on the Early Years register and the compulsory and voluntary parts of the Childcare Register. 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 employs five members of staff, including the managers. All have appropriate early years qualifications from level three to level six. One member of staff has Early Years Professional Status (EYPS).

The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is good.

Children experience good levels of care and attention and have fun whilst making progress through the early learning goals. Staff have a sound understanding of how to protect children, as good procedures for safeguarding children's welfare are in place. Overall, children are very settled and happily participate in a good range of activities that sufficiently cover most areas of learning. Planning of activities includes some opportunities for children to develop their understanding of diversity, however, resources are limited.

Good systems have been established to enable staff to monitor and evaluate the provision and some very good partnership working with parents greatly enhances the process to improve the outcomes for children.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

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

- improve the range of resources to support children's opportunities to develop positive attitudes to diversity and improve opportunities for children to develop and use their home language in their play and learning
- develop more opportunities for babies and younger children to explore and

experiment with natural materials and more opportunities for children to develop their knowledge and understanding of the natural environment both indoors and outdoors.

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

Children are safeguarded from harm, as staff ensure good policies are in place that underpin their procedures. Children are cared for by staff who regularly refresh their safeguarding training and that have completed all required suitability checks. The premises are very child friendly, clean and secure. Visitors are greeted by a member of staff in a secure reception area and a visitors book is also used to ensure an accurate record is logged.

Children are able to self select toys and resources as these are organised and stored at the children's level. This enables children to make decisions and initiate their own play and learning. Toys and resources are of good quality. The nursery is bright and welcoming to both the children and their families.

The manager and her team of staff demonstrate a good understanding of the importance of continued improvement. The nursery has only been operating for a short while but clear plans for future improvements have already been identified. A systematic procedure for self-evaluation has been established to ensure positive outcomes for children. Parents are positively encouraged to participate in this process and the decisions made that affect their children's time at nursery. For example, questionnaires are offered to parents encouraging them to comment on every aspect of the care and learning opportunities provided. Written references from parents and the children are extremely positive and express their complete satisfaction with every aspect of the provision. These comments are displayed for all too see.

Effective working partnerships are developing with other settings that deliver the Early Years Foundation Stage or external agencies that are involved with the child and their family. The delivery and collection of children using the breakfast and after school club ensure good links are in place with the local primary schools children attend. Staff have completed appropriate training to ensure children who require additional support can reach their potential. However, strategies in place to support children learning English as a second language are more limited and continue to develop.

Emphasis is given to staff training which is encouraged and supported by the manager. This ensures staff have the opportunity to refresh and build on their existing knowledge. Staff speak intuitively of the children in their care. As a result, of good communication with parents and carers, staff are very familiar with children's unique backgrounds.

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

All staff demonstrate a good understanding of how children learn. They speak knowledgeably of the children in their care resulting in children making good progress. Children are actively encouraged to contribute to the planning of activities as staff listen to the children's interests and requests. Children can freely change activities set out as they are able to access toys easily. Staff encourage children to pack away after themselves and children are learning to respect their toys and books and the environment they play in.

Good partnership with parents enhances the children's time at nursery. Parents are able to make comment in their child's 'all about me', home-link book that is used daily. Children are able to enjoy their favourite stories at home as a nursery library service has been established. Text and number lines are displayed throughout the nursery and children are beginning to recognise letters in their names and numbers.

Children are inquisitive and ask questions, they appear keen learners. For example, they are fascinated watching coloured ice blocks melting. Staff are skilful in the questions they ask to encourage children to think, such as, why has the ice melted. They mix shaving foam in the ice tray and are surprised when bubbles appear. Children have fun painting and experimenting with colours and making new colours when mixing the paints. Beautiful self portraits have been completed by the children and are displayed along with their photographs, however, paintings are not always at children's level and restrict the children discussing their achievements.

Children have great fun at the park. They use the park daily as there is no outdoor play space at the nursery. A very good risk assessment and procedure to walk to the park ensure children are safe. For example, they wear reflective jackets and are very familiar with the procedure, walking sensibly holding hands. Children enjoy fresh air and exercise at the park and use the climbing apparatus to develop their physical skills. They use bats and balls and younger children have fun blowing bubbles. Toddlers have fun jumping in leaves and watch them floating to the ground when thrown. Older children excitedly show you how they have mastered the skill of using the swings. However, children's knowledge and understanding of the wider world is limited as learning opportunities are not maximised in the indoor environment.

Staff make good observations which clearly identify the children's next steps of learning to ensure sufficient challenge is offered. Children's learning journeys are continually evaluated to ensure they are meaningful and user friendly. They are readily available within the playrooms for parents to view at any time. Open evenings are arranged to enable all working parents an opportunity to attend and discuss their child's development

The organisation of the playrooms enables children to freely access many resources that provide some good opportunities for challenge. Children show a

keen interest in the play kitchen offering meals to their friends. Even very young children confidently count the foods they use and can count to five and beyond. Children are able to enjoy mark making as varied opportunities are available to them. Babies use paint to make hand and foot prints and children make patterns in corn flour and shaving foam.

Designated play areas within the playrooms such as, quiet cosy book corners, imaginary play areas and creative tables ensure children can express their creativity in many forms. However there are limited opportunities for babies and young children to use their imagination, explore and play without purpose using natural materials.

Staff listen with interest to the children who have formed close attachments to them. Staff are good role models and promote positive behaviour, as a result, children are confident, well behaved and have good self-esteem.

Staff are very caring and speak respectfully to the children, valuing each child's unique backgrounds. Some traditional days and cultures are acknowledged within the planning. Some resources, such as, pictures displayed and dual language books encourage children to think about the wider world, differences and similarities. However, opportunities to use toys and resources daily that depict diversity, are limited.

The staff use real life situations to educate children how to stay safe. For example, when walking to the park, road safety and stranger danger is discussed. Children take some responsibility at snack time and are encouraged to pour their own drinks. They can serve their own lunch safely, as staff are on hand to encourage and support their decision making and learning skill. Children benefit from healthy snacks and meals, such as, freshly made fish pie and vegetables. Children have to be escorted to the bathrooms but are encouraged to independently take care of their own personal needs. The provision of quality resources and good procedures, such as, potties, liquid soap, paper towels and a stringent nappy changing procedure, assist children in this process and protects them from cross infection.

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	3
The effectiveness with which the setting promotes equality and diversity	3
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
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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	2
The extent to which children feel safe	2
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
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The provider confirms that the requirements of the voluntary part of the Childcare Register are:	Met
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