

Little Spring Wonders Daycare Nursery

Inspection report for early years provision

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Inspection date

25/10/2011

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

Little Spring Wonders Daycare Nursery registered in 2011 and is privately owned and managed. The setting operates from five rooms within converted premises in the Great Baddow area of Chelmsford, Essex. Children share access to three secure enclosed outdoor play areas.

The nursery opens Monday to Friday for 51 weeks of the year. Sessions are from 7am to 7pm. Children are able to attend for a variety of sessions. A maximum of 61 children may attend the nursery at any one time. There are currently 52 children attending who are within the Early Years Foundation Stage. The provision is registered by Ofsted on the Early Years Register and both the voluntary and compulsory parts of the Childcare Register. Funded early education is provided for three- and four-year-olds. The nursery is currently supporting a number of children with special educational needs and/or disabilities, and has strategies in place to support children who have English as an additional language.

There are 17 members of staff who work directly with the children, including the owner manager. Most of the staff hold relevant early years qualifications to at least level 2. One member of staff holds Qualified Teacher Status and another has Early Years Professional Status. There are two members of staff who are currently working towards additional early years qualifications. The nursery also employs four cooks and a cleaner.

The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is good.

Children experience good levels of care and make positive progress in their learning and development. They settle well and benefit from a good range of play opportunities that are planned generally well to suit their individual developmental needs and interests. Effective risk assessments of the nursery environment and outings ensure children are kept very safe and secure. Strong partnerships are fostered with parents, carers and other early years settings as staff provide ongoing opportunities for sharing information about children's changing needs. Since the nursery was taken over by a new owner, staff morale has improved greatly and effective self-evaluation has led to significant improvement of the overall quality of the provision.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

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

- increase the use of open-ended questions to fully extend children's thinking and help them to make further connections in their play and learning
- strengthen the short-term planning to clearly show how practitioners support individual children to achieve the next steps in their developmental progress.

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

Staff understand their responsibilities in protecting children from harm and are supported by the well-established safeguarding procedures that are in place. For example, all staff are expected to review any updates to the written safeguarding policy and almost all staff have completed a safeguarding children training course. Robust recruitment procedures ensure that staff are not left alone with children until all necessary suitability checks are cleared. Procedures to keep children safe and secure at the nursery are very effective. For example, the owner has invested in a closed circuit television system to ensure children's whereabouts can be constantly monitored from the office. Risk assessment records are kept to meet requirements and staff are confidently fulfil their responsibility to carry out ongoing daily safety checks. Considerable attention has been given to improving the general condition of the nursery environment and the availability of toys and resources. As a result, the nursery has a bright and airy feel and children are able to access resources that support their learning and development in all areas.

Parents and carers feel that the staff are very welcoming and engage with them well. They are kept informed of the activities their children are involved in as staff take time to chat to them at the end of each session and to share their children's learning journey records with them regularly. Informative monthly newsletters, open days and meaningful displays go further to ensure that parents are fully updated on changes at the nursery. The setting has established good links with professionals from outside health and education agencies. For example, the setting's Special Educational Needs Coordinator values guidance from speech and language therapists and education specialists when drawing up individual education plans for children. The setting is proactive in seeking available funding to ensure they can offer children the one-to-one support they need reach their full potential. Children experience good continuity of care because the staff actively promote the sharing of information and observations with the other early years settings that children attend in the local and wider areas.

Managers lead and encourage a culture of reflective practice. They actively use the Ofsted self-evaluation form to review the quality of provision for all children. As a result, the staff are very aware of the priorities for development. For example, the staff have fully reviewed the systems for planning since the nursery opened under new management, and they are now much more competent in using observations and assessments to track children's progress. However, they also recognise the need to review this further to ensure they can clearly demonstrate how activities are planned to promote the specific next steps in learning for individual children. The setting has a strong capacity to improve in the future, as staff welcome the guidance of advisors from the local authority and are supported by their managers to attend ongoing training to extend their skills and knowledge.

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

The warm and welcoming atmosphere created by the staff helps children to feel confident, secure and settled in their surroundings. The nursery implements an effective key person system which ensures that each child is able to develop trusting bonds. For example, babies who are new to the setting receive close emotional support from their key person, and become increasingly confident when it is time to separate from their parents. Staff are enthusiastic and spend a majority of their time getting involved in the children's play. For example, they join in as children play at making them food and cups of tea in the role play area. Although staff show interest in what children say and do, they do not always make the best use of open-ended questions to consolidate children's learning and to extend their thinking. For example, there are missed opportunities for children to practise their early counting skills and to develop their vocabulary as they make different shapes with the play dough. Babies begin to develop a strong interest in books as they learn how to turn the pages of various board books and older children listen carefully as the staff read a story about a magic carpet. This interest is extended through trips to the local library. Children enjoy the high levels of social interaction during circle time and song activities. These provide good opportunities to support the development of children's language skills as they talk about the weather, shapes and colours.

Children behave well. They like to be kind to others as they gently push the baby's rocking seat and are keen to help when it is time to tidy up. Children develop good skills for the future as they use everyday technology including an imaginary washing machine and oven in the role play areas. They are supported to master their skills when using small apparatus, tools and equipment. For example, staff show children how to handle scissors safely during craft activities and support younger children to feed themselves with a spoon. Babies enjoy exploring the contents of various treasure baskets, feeling the different textures of the fir cones, wooden spoons and squidgy balls. Children actively learn about diversity and aspects of the wider world when they play with multi-cultural dolls and create pictures to add to a display about Diwali.

Children make good use of the 'big garden' area to enjoy physical play. They master their ability to control their bodies as they pedal various ride-on toys and climb on larger apparatus. Children show a strong interest in the natural environment as they enjoy exploring the woodland areas of the garden; gathering Autumn leaves, twigs and acorns. Babies enjoy the freedom to crawl and across the grassed areas, reaching out for balls that are placed in front of them to encourage their movements. Good emphasis is placed on supporting children to lead healthy lifestyles. They are encouraged to wash their hands during appropriate times in the daily routine, using facilities that minimise the spread of infection. Babies and children keenly sit together at meal times to enjoy delicious hot snacks, lunches and teas, prepared from fresh nutritious ingredients by the nursery's cooks. There are very effective systems in place to ensure children's individual dietary needs are stringently met. For example, food is served on a red plate to provide a visual reminder that it is suitable for a child who has an

intolerance to dairy. Children are actively learning how to keep themselves safe as staff take time to explain safe routines, such as remembering to use walking legs inside and being discouraged from putting smaller toys in their mouths.

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
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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	2
The extent to which children develop skills for the future	2

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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