

Spring Lane Day Nursery

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique reference number EY307211
Inspection date 20/01/2012
Inspector Susan Scott

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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).

Children only attend this setting before and/or after the school day and/or during the school holidays. The judgements in this report reflect the quality of early years provision offered to children during those periods.

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

Spring Lane Day Nursery is one of 108 nurseries run by Asquith Court Nurseries Ltd. It opened in 2005 and operates from eight rooms in a purpose-built building. It is situated on school premises on the outskirts of Canterbury. All children have access to secure enclosed outdoor play areas. This nursery is registered on the Early Years Register and both parts of the Childcare Register. A maximum of 143 children may attend the nursery at any one time. The nursery is open each weekday from 7.30am to 6.30pm for 51 weeks of the year. There are currently 106 children under five years on roll. Of these, 39 children receive funding for early education. Children come from a wide catchment area. The nursery currently supports a number of children with special educational needs and/or disabilities. The nursery employs 36 members of staff. Of these, 27 hold appropriate early years qualifications and three of these are level 6, with a further two members working towards a qualification.

The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is good.

Successful recording systems build and track children's progress and, in the main, ensure development at the child's own pace towards the early learning goals. Children feel safe, because they benefit from consistent and well-understood routines which take account of their individual needs and interests. Positive relationships between staff, children and parents develop, supported by a regular exchange of information within the secure and enabling environment. Staff generally identify any necessary improvements, well-understood procedures and systems to review strengths and areas for improvement accurately. All the staff work closely together to evaluate the provision, and their capacity to keep improving is good. Children's good progress is underpinned by very positive relationships and good systems to involve and communicate with parents and carers.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

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

- provide posters, pictures and other resources on display to show the setting's positive attitude to disability, and to ethnic, cultural and social diversity
- improve the organisation of everyday routines such as snack and meal times to minimise the time children spend waiting passively
- plan activities that offer physical challenges and plenty of opportunities for physical activity indoors.

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

Children's welfare is effectively safeguarded. Staff have a good understanding of safeguarding, as they attend regular training and have established procedures for dealing with concerns or allegations. An induction system for new staff ensures they are aware of safe practice. There is clear information provided on how to raise any concerns, and staff respond in a professional manner. Children are protected by the systems of checks and records of risk assessments and staff take prompt measures to minimise hazards. For example, the defective laundry equipment is reported to the head office so that the handyperson can attend to it. The managers and staff complete a self-evaluation and identify improvements they intend to make; for example, they have reviewed children's use of play areas in each room and re-organise resources to promote and extend children's self-chosen play. The continual review of provision and staff participation in a variety of training successfully builds upon the quality of the provision, by invigorating the practice of staff.

Play resources are age-appropriate and attractive, enabling children to experience play and learning, which is adapted to suit their ages and stages of development. There is a good range of resources catering for the interests and needs of the children who attend. For instance, there are plenty of interesting resources in the outside play areas, including climbing apparatus, bikes, sand and earth to play with and painting or chalking activities. Staff check and clean resources regularly but there is not a record of when equipment was last cleaned. There are some resources reflecting diversity and showing different languages, reflecting those spoken by children and families who use the nursery. However, these are mostly not displayed, diluting the positive messages staff wish to impart. Staff offer a warm welcome to children with special educational needs and/or disabilities who are able to make good progress and are supported by shared targets outlined in their individual education plans.

A good two-way flow of information ensures staff regularly make parents aware of children's achievements and discuss any concerns they may have. Information is shared when children first begin at the nursery, and the use of unique stories enables continuing parental contributions. Parents report their satisfaction with the frequent written and verbal feedback about their children's progress and achievements. The staff have very positive relationships with parents and parental contributions are valued, for example, through use of questionnaires and a suggestion box. Several parents spoken to expressed their great satisfaction with the service they receive, and are confident that their children make good progress. One parent said she had no concerns in three years and would happily recommend the setting to others. There are opportunities for children to experience visitors, as the nursery has links with other organisations, such as the dentist who attends, to other agencies, such as the specialist teachers and assessment centres who are involved with children. There is some contact with local schools where children will be going, which benefits children, as information can be shared.

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

Children enjoy a varied and interesting range of play activities to support their progress towards the early learning goals. There is a clear and well understood system for making frequent records of children's achievements and experiences. Records note observations of children's development in all areas of learning and key persons use these to assess progress and to plan for the next steps in children's learning which take account of children's interests. Staff have a good understanding of the Practice Guidance for the Early Years Foundation Stage and use this confidently, identifying children's learning styles and welfare needs well.

Staff plan activities which are developmentally appropriate and accessible to all children, who benefit from making their own choices about the toys and resources they like to explore. Staff successfully support children's independence and promote opportunities for babies and children to make their own choices. For instance, babies and toddlers enjoy playing in the garden and using the push along, or sit and ride toys in the refurbished garden areas. Children play happily in this safe environment, although there are few opportunities to engage in physically challenging play, such as climbing or jumping, indoors. All children are taken on local walks and outings and babies and children experience some opportunities to go out on short local outings.

There are good measures in place to ensure children are kept safe. Staff ensure regular evacuations are practiced and recorded so that children learn how to act safely in an emergency. There are good security systems in place and children are encouraged to act safely inside and out; for example, toddlers are reminded to stand in line at the garden gate when they are about to leave this area. This enables children to learn how to behave responsibly and they are sensitively reminded that they have to share with each other when the need arises. Children are happy and enjoy their time at the nursery, as staff respond to their needs and praise their achievements, building up their confidence and self esteem. Children's health and well-being is effectively supported through routines that take account of their individual needs. For example, babies and toddlers can sleep in cots, or on mattresses on the floor with fresh bedding, at a time that suits their individual needs; staff are vigilant about checking them regularly.

Children freely access a wide range of play resources inside and out, including construction resources, investigating science and nature resources, arts and crafts, music and books. They have made their own books with the help of staff, which promotes their confidence and understanding of different activities, families and visits. On the whole, children are well engaged and independent in their choices of play and learning; however, toddlers currently wait passively for a few minutes before they can eat their lunches, as they have limited access to hand washing and are encouraged to do this as a group.

Children develop an awareness of their own health by enjoying opportunities to discuss the foods they eat, and learning the benefits of a healthy diet. There is a well-understood system to ensure their dietary needs and preferences are known

by the staff serving the food, thereby ensuring their health and safety. Babies and children learn how to use cutlery through practical activities, such as feeding themselves with small-sized cutlery. Staff assist them and provide good support and supervision, although this is rarely needed, as children relish their freshly cooked lunch and are engrossed in feeding themselves. They display good appetites.

Children enjoy using the resources for imaginative role play, including the dolls and dressing-up clothes, which enable them to learn about real life situations and provide opportunities to explore varied cultures. They develop positive attitudes to differences; for example, staff provide them with items, such as spectacles, which they experiment with and wear when they create a pretend optician. Staff build upon children's enjoyment of books by reading to them, while conversations develop their vocabulary. For instance, when discussing a story about animals, children are asked if leopards are stripy or spotty.

Children are keen to extend their matching and counting skills when they play various games, such as dominoes, with each other and staff members. This promotes their mathematical skills. Their knowledge and understanding of colours, patterns and shapes is often motivated through activities based upon festivals. They are about to learn about Australia Day and Chinese New Year; they plan to celebrate these events making flags and experimenting with chopsticks. All the children enjoy arts and crafts, happily engaging in painting inside and outside. The older children enthusiastically experiment with using the smart board to produce images. They also access the touchscreen computer with independence and skill, with staff support and supervision available if necessary. Children learn about the world and their community through visits from a dentist and a group who bring animals for them to experience and learn about. They benefit from being situated on a large site where school buses and trains frequently can be observed and staff understand the benefits of discussing these with children.

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	1
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

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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