

Springfield Stars Preschool

Springfield Primary School, Forsythia Close, CHELMSFORD, CM1 6XW

Inspection date

Previous inspection date

10/12/2012

Not Applicable

The quality and standards of the early years provision

This inspection:

2

Previous inspection:

Not Applicable

How well the early years provision meets the needs of the range of children who attend	2
The contribution of the early years provision to the well-being of children	2
The effectiveness of the leadership and management of the early years provision	2

The quality and standards of the early years provision

This provision is good

- Practitioners demonstrate a secure understanding of the children in their key worker groups. This ensures that all children's individual needs, requirements and interests are effectively met.
- Children engage in a good range of freely-chosen play experiences, which enable them to explore at their own pace. Their knowledge is enhanced through well-planned, adult-led activities, which enable them to be further challenged.
- Effective management of children's dietary needs and allergies ensures that they remain well and are fully included in all activities.
- The proficient monitoring of practitioners' on-going professional development ensures that all staff are fully supported. Training needs are identified through this process and appropriate courses or in-house training events provided.

It is not yet outstanding because

- Opportunities for children to make choices about whether they play and learn in an outdoor environment are not effective during the winter months.
- Effective partnerships with other early years settings that children attend, have not been fully embedded to support children's transitions.

Information about this inspection

Inspections of registered early years provision are scheduled:

- at least once in every inspection cycle. The current cycle ends on 31 July 2016
- more frequently where Ofsted identifies a need to do so, for example where provision was previously judged as inadequate
- brought forward in the inspection cycle where Ofsted has received information that suggests the provision may not be meeting the legal requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage; or where assessment of the provision identifies a need for early inspection
- prioritised for inspection where we have received information that the provision is not meeting the requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage and which suggests children may not be safe
- at the completion of an investigation into failure to comply with the requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage.

Inspection activities

- The inspector observed activities in the main playroom.
- The inspector held discussions with the manager and other practitioners at appropriate times during the inspection.

The inspector saw a range of records and documents, such as, children's details, staff clearance and information, accident records, medication information, staff appraisals, written policies and information about children's learning and progress.
- The inspector took account of the views of parents, spoken to at the end of the morning session.

Inspector

Lynn Hughes

Full Report

Information about the setting

Springfield Stars Preschool was registered in 2012 on the Early Years Register. It is situated in purpose built building in the grounds of the Springfield Primary School in Chelmsford, Essex. It is privately owned and managed by Learning is Fun Ltd. The pre-school serves the local area and is accessible to all children. There is a fully enclosed area available for outdoor play.

The pre-school employs eight members of childcare staff. Of these, seven hold appropriate early years qualifications at level 2 and 3. One member of staff holds Early Years Professional Status. The pre-school opens Monday to Friday term-time only. Sessions are from 9am until 12pm Monday to Friday and from 12.15pm until 3.15pm on Monday, Thursday and Friday. Children attend for a variety of sessions. There are currently 49 children attending who are within this age group. The pre-school provides funded early education for two-, three- and four-year-old children. It supports a number of children who speak English as an additional language and children with special educational needs and/or disabilities.

What the setting needs to do to improve further

To further improve the quality of the early years provision the provider should:

- review and further develop opportunities for practitioners to work in partnership with other early years provisions, where children attend more than one setting
- review the use of the outdoor environment during the winter months to provide children with opportunities to make choices about whether they learn indoors or outdoors.

Inspection judgements

How well the early years provision meets the needs of the range of children who attend

Children are enthusiastic and engage in play opportunities, which enable them to explore a wide range of resources. They are excited to be at pre-school and enjoy the company of their friends and the adults caring for them. The practitioners' secure knowledge of the children in their key worker groups, enables them to tailor planning to meet their individual requirements and to follow their interests.

Practitioners demonstrate a good knowledge of how children learn and develop. Clear assessment of children's prior skills and starting points on entry to the pre-school enables practitioners to build a firm picture of children's progress. Parents are effectively involved in their children's development and are encouraged to help to identify children's next steps in learning. Practice across all practitioners is consistent, as the manager effectively monitors and evaluates the children's learning journeys. She provides feedback to individual practitioners where required. Regular staff meetings provide good opportunities for key persons to discuss the learning needs of the children in their group and feed ideas into the overall planning.

The learning environment is bright, welcoming and attractively decorated. Large sections of wall space are used to display examples of children's creative work. This helps to promote children's sense of belonging and strengthens their self-esteem. There is an extensive range of play equipment available to children, which provides learning opportunities across a wide range of subjects. The resources are effectively presented at the beginning of each session and children have opportunities to make choices over their play and learning as they freely access equipment from a low-level storage unit. A fully enclosed outdoor area enables children to enjoy fresh air and exercise. During the summer months this is easily accessible, providing children with good opportunities to choose whether they play indoors or outdoors. However, provision is not made for this freedom of choice during the colder weather, when the door to the garden needs to remain closed.

Children communicate effectively, sharing conversations about real and imaginary experiences. They chat confidently about their family and siblings as they enter into a discussion with practitioners about who is going to come to see them perform in their pre-school Christmas show. The Christmas show brings great joy and excitement throughout the pre-school, with children enthusiastically preparing for their roles as elves, snowmen and reindeer. Special roles, for example, the 'official photographer', are created for those children for whom the excitement of the 'big stage' becomes too much. This role is taken very seriously and with the support of practitioners, the various characters are expertly photographed.

Children's knowledge of the local community and wider world are effectively extended through a range of planned visitors to the pre-school. For example, children bring their pets in to show the other children. Fire fighters have visited with their fire appliances and police officers have shared information with the children about keeping safe. Fathers and grandfathers have visited during the week around Father's Day. Photographs of these events show the children thoroughly enjoying these visits and participating in the exciting range of activities the visitors bring with them.

The contribution of the early years provision to the well-being of children

Practitioners are very experienced in making young children feel safe, secure and comfortable during their pre-school day. Well-planned settling-in procedures, such as, visits to the pre-school with parents and younger siblings, enable children to develop a close relationship with their key person. These also provide good opportunities for the key person to establish a clear knowledge about the children's home life, starting points and interests. The children's favourite activities, toys or experiences are placed on special stars on a wall chart and used in planning to ensure that every child's pre-school experience is tailored to meet their individual requirements.

Children develop a good understanding about safety as practitioners help them to understand risk and remind them of the simple safety rules. Their attention is obtained by staff asking them to 'show a wiggle'. Children raise their hands, wiggle their fingers and wait quietly for their next instruction, for example, at tidy-up time, or when a visitor is introduced. Children learn clear self-care skills, such as, using the toilet independently and washing their hands. When asked why they wash their hands; they initially reply that it

keeps the toys clean. Then they remember that it is also important for keeping their hands germ free.

Children enjoy a range of fresh fruits and chopped vegetables for their mid-session snack. They learn to pour drinks proficiently and talk about food and drink which are good for them. Children with dietary needs and allergies have their requirements expertly met through the pre-school's clear management of specific needs. Some children stay at the pre-school for lunch, bringing with them a pre-packed lunch, supplied by their parents. With the support of practitioners, they proficiently open packaging and know that it is important to eat their sandwiches and healthy options before any sweet treats.

Practitioners provide good support to children to help them to prepare for their next stage in learning. For example, effective communication between practitioners within the pre-school ensures that all adults working with children have an understanding of each child's individual needs. Good transitions between the pre-school and local schools help children to be prepared for school. For example, for approximately six weeks prior to children leaving the pre-school, the role play area becomes a school with a range of school uniforms from the various schools the children will be attending. Photographs are used to provide children with a clear picture of their new environment. The pre-school has a number of children who attend more than one early years setting and at present links with these settings are made through the children's parents. Whilst this provides a means of communication, it does not effectively enable key persons to skilfully support children's transitions between the two early years settings.

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

Children are well protected from harm as practitioners demonstrate a good understanding of their responsibilities with regards to safeguarding children. Designated practitioners hold responsibility for monitoring and dealing with all safeguarding concerns and have attended appropriate training. All other practitioners update their safeguarding knowledge through on-line training courses and in-house training events. Robust procedures for risk assessing the premises inside and outside ensure that children play and learn in a safe and secure environment. Individual risk assessments are in place for those children with allergies or specific needs. All adults working with children are suitable to do so, and proof of their checks are available to inspect.

The pre-school has been operating in this area for many years. It was recently taken over by the current owner, who is also the pre-school manager. The manager is committed to providing children, parents and carers with a well-organised, proficient pre-school, which meets the needs of all of the families attending. Self-evaluation is used to identify the pre-school's strengths and weaknesses and is discussed at regular intervals during staff meetings. Plans are in place to involve parents and children more effectively in this process in the future. The manager monitors the performance of practitioners well, through regular appraisal meetings and discussions. Training needs are effectively identified through this process. Practitioners with key roles within the pre-school, for example the special educational needs co-ordinator (SENCO), work well with a wide range

of other professionals to support children and their families. The pre-school benefits from a close working relationship with the local authority and support staff.

Parents play a full and meaningful role in their children's learning and care through careful and skilful liaison with their children's key person. They are invited to view their children's learning journeys and to contribute towards identifying their next steps in learning. Parents spoken to at the time of the inspection comment on the friendliness of the practitioners. Many of them chose this pre-school because it was recommended to them by other parents, because it is small and welcoming and because they heard how well children progress during their time at the pre-school. The pre-school is situated on a primary school site. Transitions and communication with the school are very good.

What inspection judgements mean

Registered early years provision		
Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	Outstanding provision is highly effective in meeting the needs of all children exceptionally well. This ensures that children are very well prepared for the next stage of their learning.
Grade 2	Good	Good provision is effective in delivering provision that meets the needs of all children well. This ensures children are ready for the next stage of their learning.
Grade 3	Satisfactory	Satisfactory provision is performing less well than expectations in one or more of the key areas. It requires improvement in order to be good.
Grade 4	Inadequate	Provision that is inadequate requires significant improvement and/or enforcement. The provision is failing to give children an acceptable standard of early years education and/or is not meeting the safeguarding and welfare requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage. It will be inspected again within 12 months of the date of this inspection.
Met		The provision has no children on roll. The inspection judgement is that the provider continues to meet the requirements for registration.
Not Met		The provision has no children on roll. The inspection judgement is that the provider does not meet the requirements for registration.

Inspection

This inspection was carried out by Ofsted under Sections 49 and 50 of the Childcare Act 2006 on the quality and standards of provision that is registered on the Early Years Register. The registered person must ensure that this provision complies with the

statutory framework for children's learning, development and care, known as the Early Years Foundation Stage.

Setting details

Unique reference number	EY447019
Local authority	Essex
Inspection number	804377
Type of provision	
Registration category	Childcare - Non-Domestic
Age range of children	0 - 5
Total number of places	23
Number of children on roll	49
Name of provider	Learning is Fun Ltd
Date of previous inspection	Not applicable
Telephone number	01245467120

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Type of provision

For the purposes of this inspection the following definitions apply:

Full-time provision is that which operates for more than three hours. These are usually known as nurseries, nursery schools and pre-schools and must deliver the Early Years Foundation Stage. They are registered on the Early Years Register and pay the higher fee for registration.

Sessional provision operates for more than two hours but does not exceed three hours in any one day. These are usually known as pre-schools, kindergartens or nursery schools and must deliver the Early Years Foundation Stage. They are registered on the Early Years Register and pay the lower fee for registration.

Childminders care for one or more children where individual children attend for a period of more than two hours in any one day. They operate from domestic premises that are usually their own home. They are registered on the Early Years Register and must deliver the Early Years Foundation Stage.

Out of school provision may be sessional or full-time provision and is delivered before or after school and/or in the summer holidays. They are registered on the Early Years Register and must deliver the Early Years Foundation Stage. Where children receive their Early Years Foundation Stage in school these providers do not have to deliver the learning and development requirements in full but should complement the experiences children receive in school.

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