

Elm Cottage Day Nursery

11 Crescent Park, Stockport, Cheshire, SK4 2HS

Inspection date	16/01/2013
Previous inspection date	06/01/2011

The quality and standards of the early years provision	This inspection:	
	Previous inspection:	
How well the early years provision meets the needs of the range of children who attend		1
The contribution of the early years provision to the well-being of children		1
The effectiveness of the leadership and management of the early years provision		1

The quality and standards of the early years provision

This provision is outstanding

- A welcoming and exciting environment, rich in high quality accessible resources, supports children's learning.
- Highly skilled staff have excellent knowledge of how children learn and couple this with a very secure knowledge of each child's individual needs. This enables very successful promotion of children's care and learning.
- Assessment of children's development is of a high quality. Staff plan activities and environments that provide stimulating and challenging activities to motivate children's learning, building around their interests.
- Children thrive as the staff foster their independence extremely well. This builds their confidence, resilience and ability to learn by themselves.
- The systems for self-evaluation are very effective and ensure the setting's priorities for continuous development are targeted and well driven.
- Excellent transition arrangements support children moving between playrooms and onto school.

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.

The provision is also registered on the voluntary and compulsory parts of the Childcare Register. This report includes a judgment about compliance with the requirements of that register.

Inspection activities

- The inspector made a number of observations of indoor and outdoor play activities, including a joint observation of an activity with the nursery manager.
- The inspector spoke to members of staff and children.
- The inspector took into account the views of parents spoken to on the day of the inspection and comments from parental questionnaires.
- The inspector looked at children's assessment records, planning documentation, the provider's self-evaluation form and a range of other documentation.

Inspector

Kate Smith

Full Report

Information about the setting

Elm Cottage Day Nursery is one of six provisions, including three nurseries and three out of school clubs run by Elm Cottage Limited. It opened in 1989 and operates from a large converted house, situated in Heaton Norris, a residential area of Stockport. The nursery is close to schools, shops, parks and public transport links. Children have access to an enclosed outdoor play area. The nursery is open each weekday from 8am to 6pm, for 51

weeks of the year.

The nursery is registered on the Early Years Register and both the compulsory and voluntary parts of the Childcare Register. There are currently 101 children in the early years age range on roll and children attend for a variety of sessions. The nursery provides funded early education for three- and four-year-old children. It supports children who speak English as an additional language and those with special educational needs and/or disabilities.

A total of 19 members of staff work with the children. Of these, four hold appropriate early years qualifications at degree level, two hold Early Years Professional Status and one holds a level 5 early years qualification. Five members of staff hold appropriate early years qualifications at level 3 and three hold appropriate early years qualifications at level 2. The setting is supported by a general manager who is a qualified teacher. Two cooks provide freshly prepared meals daily.

What the setting needs to do to improve further

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

- continue to develop children's access to open ended resources in the outdoor environment to strengthen further their ability to enhance their own play independently.

Inspection judgements

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

The nursery provides a rich and vibrant learning environment in which children are very well nurtured and make excellent progress in their learning and development. Highly skilled staff have an exemplary understanding of individual children's needs and build exciting learning opportunities around their interests to motivate and engage them in stimulating learning opportunities. For example, children delight in investigating objects captured in ice, having previously placed them in small containers of water and left them outside overnight. A wealth of high quality resources are available for children to independently access as they make choices about their own learning. Children design their own jewellery, measuring paper and string they have chosen, cutting it to their own required size before adding gems and other collage materials to create crowns, necklaces and bracelets. Thrilled with their designs, children are encouraged to show them to other staff, further boosting their self-esteem.

Highly skilled staff support child chosen activities very effectively by encouraging the children to access resources independently, use tools effectively, think critically and sustain their concentration. Staff commitment to building on children's interests and allowing them to lead the play, while enhancing learning opportunities contributes to the children's high levels of confidence. Children initiate conversations with visitors to the nursery, politely asking questions about who they are. In the baby room chunky low level soft play blocks are used to create small cosy learning bays, such as a sensory black and white area that they can explore independently. Emergent walking skills are also supported by babies pulling themselves up and cruising along the furniture as they make choices about their play. Consequently, children's independence is developing very well. Children enjoy accessing musical instruments and these skills are further enhanced by professionals who come to the setting to play the violin and encourage children to follow rhythms and tempos.

Children enjoy investigating opportunities to blow up balloons, which they then dip in paint and let go of inside a large cardboard box, delighting in watching them twirl around splattering the box in a variety of colours. These activities present many opportunities for the children to problem solve, for example, exploring why the untied filled balloons fly when you let go. Staff give time for children to think and model language very effectively. Children have many opportunities to develop their communication, language and literacy skills. The nursery uses language programmes including 'Every Child a Talker' and phase 1 of 'Letters and Sounds'. Supported with fun daily activities, and their emerging Makaton sign language skills, children's communication, language and literacy development is exceptional. In all rooms children have opportunities to access high quality books independently. Staff read stories to individual children, snuggled into them, and small groups, often supported by props to stimulate children's interests. There are many opportunities for children to mark make in a variety of messy play activities and practise their writing skills, both indoors and in the outdoor environment. Younger children enjoy the challenge of rubbing off chalk marks as they clean the equipment in the garden.

Children enjoy using a lap top computer and use their application of mathematics to think about out how many robots they still need to make a total of 10 if they have already have three. The younger children are confident as they count out loud using numbers, while making 'cakes' for the dolls in their role play. Children utilise the stimulating outdoor garden daily with the older children being able to access it independently. They notice the natural world and identify changing features, such as ice patches that are starting to melt. Staff build on children's interests, making dens, and provide additional resources for the children to use in to the rich outdoor learning environment, ensuring children are motivated and that their learning is challenged. However, the further development of open ended resources in the outdoor environment, for children to access continuously, would strengthen further their ability to independently and imaginatively enhance their own play.

Staff monitor closely children's individual development, assessing regularly the progress that they are making in their learning against expected levels. Children's progress is tracked very effectively and this information is used to develop additional learning opportunities for individuals or groups of children and highlight any concerns staff may have. For example, enhancing mark making in the outdoor area has improved boys participation in writing. Staff plan next steps in children's learning and build on their

interests within the setting and from home. Through the staff's very strong engagement with parents and others, the children's needs are exceptionally well met. As a result, children thrive and make excellent progress in their learning and development.

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

Children are very happy and settled in the warm and welcoming environment. All children show an extremely strong sense of security and belonging within the setting. Children benefit from a highly effective key person system and home visits prior to starting enable staff to talk at length with parents about their child. Transition procedures, between rooms, are also very well designed. Children are supported by a member of staff moving into the next room with them, which aids familiarity and well-being. Consequently, the children feel confident as they change rooms. Staff are highly skilled in recognising the uniqueness of each child and providing for their individual needs and interests. The relationship between the key person, the children and their parents are highly effective in ensuring outstanding outcomes for all children. Babies are confident to explore their surroundings safe in the knowledge they have the support of nurturing staff and feel secure. They form close attachments to the staff and enjoy cuddling close to the staff to read books.

Children enjoy healthy snacks of fresh fruit and eat healthy well-balanced meals prepared freshly every day on the premises, to help establish healthy eating habits. The children happily drink milk and water as they sit in small groups at meal times, which successfully promotes children's conversational skills very effectively as they chatter happily with their friends. In the baby room self-care skills are encouraged by the staff as children begin to feed themselves. Staff respect children's individual care practices and routines very well. The older children's self-help skills are well developed as they serve their own lunch. Older children access the bathroom and wash their hands independently before meals and after messy play activities. Children benefit from fresh air daily as they have wonderful opportunities to enjoy the outdoor environment in all weathers.

The children's experiences of the world are widened as staff take them on public transport for outings and arrange visits to the local science museum to enhance their understanding of technology. Visits to the setting by professionals and parents further develop children's understanding of the world. For example, a school crossing patrol attendant talked to the children about keeping safe when crossing the road. Staff also invited a parent to bring their new baby to the setting to bathe the baby, encouraging children to develop their understanding of hygiene and keeping our bodies clean.

Children are very well behaved and have a clear understanding of the boundaries and rules. For example, staff reiterate to children in the role play 'police station' that only four children can play inside at any one time. When one child left the role play, another shouted to his friend explaining 'there's only three in now so you can come in'. Children respect the staff and each other. The children contribute to the local community singing Christmas Carols and make hampers for the elderly in warden controlled homes. The setting also performed the Christmas Nativity play in the local church, which was eagerly attended and the children were very proud of their achievements.

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

The inspiring leadership of the nursery team promotes a highly inclusive environment, where adults and children feel valued and respected. Children's care, welfare and learning are significantly enhanced by the highly effective way in which the setting is led and managed. Comprehensive systems throughout the nursery safeguard and promote children's welfare and all staff are trained very effectively to recognise any child who may be at risk of harm and take the appropriate action. Children's safety and security is a high priority with staff undertaking regular risk assessments and rigorous daily checks of the indoor and outdoor environments. This ensures that children can play in safe and secure premises. Staff are fully aware of their responsibilities in keeping children safe and are vigilant, while allowing the children to have sufficient risk in their play to promote challenge. For example, the older children use saws, hammers and chisels to make wooden mobiles.

Robust recruitment and vetting procedures help to ensure that all staff are suitable to work with children. All staff undergo an induction programme and their progress is monitored by room leaders and more formally with an annual review. The manager sets very high standards and staff are fully committed to achieving standards of excellence in all areas. This is demonstrated by the support given to all staff to continue further with their professional development, which has led to the setting's team being very highly qualified and skilled. As a consequence, the staff feel motivated and valued and demonstrate high levels of enthusiasm to provide highly effective learning experiences for children. Managers evaluate practice and systems are currently being developed for staff to engage in peer observations to further enhance teaching opportunities.

Self-evaluation shows rigorous monitoring of the effectiveness of the setting and feedback from parents and staff help to drive further improvement. Priorities for future development are well targeted and ongoing in a desire to maintain the highest standards. Staff are sensitive to the needs of families and the local community. The setting has very robust systems in place with regard to partnership working. Partnerships with parents and carers are one of its many strengths. Sharing information about children's interests and individual needs during an initial home visit, prior to starting at the setting, ensures staff can build on what children already know and can do. There is a daily verbal two-way exchange of information between parents and staff to ensure each child's needs are identified and met. Parents add to their children's development records by completing observation notes from home, and continue with activities, which demonstrates they are fully engaged in their children's learning.

When required, individual support is sought from other professionals to identify, monitor and promote the development of children with special educational needs and/or disabilities. Children follow individual educational plans developed in consultation with parents. The setting is highly committed to working in partnership with other providers and external agencies to ensure that all children receive the support they need. School teachers are also invited into the setting to talk at length with the children's key workers.

This sharing of information about their learning and development, prior to the children leaving the setting, supports the transition process into school.

The Childcare Register

The requirements for the compulsory part of the Childcare Register are **Met**

The requirements for the voluntary part of the Childcare Register are **Met**

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	307135
Local authority	Stockport
Inspection number	900954
Type of provision	
Registration category	Childcare - Non-Domestic
Age range of children	0 - 17
Total number of places	50
Number of children on roll	101
Name of provider	Elm Cottage Limited
Date of previous inspection	06/01/2011
Telephone number	0161 443 2228

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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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