

St Nicholas Nursery

Bennetts End House, Eastwick Row, Hemel Hempstead, Hertfordshire, HP2 4JQ

Inspection date	10/05/2013
Previous inspection date	21/02/2011

The quality and standards of the early years provision	This inspection:	2
	Previous inspection:	3
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

- Children behave well because staff have clear and appropriate expectations for behaviour. They use praise well to encourage positive behaviour.
- Management have good insight into the strengths and areas for development, and have set realistic goals in order to improve children's care and learning.
- Staff keep parents well informed of their child's progress and parents have good opportunities to contribute to their child's learning. This means that children benefit from a shared and cohesive approach to ensure that they make the best progress possible.
- Staff place high priority on the safety of children. They have good knowledge of how to keep children protected from harm, and implement this well in their practice.

It is not yet outstanding because

- There is scope to enhance children's recognition and understanding of numbers using a wider range of resources and means.

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
- scheduled more frequently where Ofsted identifies a need to do so, for example where provision was previously judged 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 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
- scheduled 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 carried out a joint observation of an adult-led activity with the manager.
- The inspector tracked the progress of several children.
- The inspector sampled a range of documentation.
- The inspector had a discussion with the management team.
- The inspector spoke to parents, children and staff and took their views into consideration during the inspection.

Inspector

Jennifer Beckles

Full Report

Information about the setting

St Nicholas Nursery was registered in 1995 and is on the Early Years Register and the compulsory and voluntary parts of the Childcare Register. It is situated in Hemel Hempstead, Hertfordshire, and is privately managed by Sunhill Daycare. The nursery serves the local area and is accessible to all children. It operates from a listed building and there is a fully enclosed area available for outdoor play.

The nursery employs 17 members of childcare staff. Of these, 15 hold appropriate early years qualifications at level 3, and two staff are working towards further qualifications. The nursery opens Monday to Friday all year round from 7.30am until 6.30pm. It is closed on public holidays and for one week at Christmas. Children attend for a variety of sessions. There are currently 107 children on roll who are in the early years age group. The nursery provides funded early education for two-, three- and four-year-olds. It supports children with special 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:

- consider ways to enhance children's recognition and understanding of numbers, for example, through tactile experiences, such as numeral cards made from sandpaper, velvet or string.

Inspection judgements

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

Children make good progress in this well-organised nursery because staff meet their needs effectively overall. Staff provide interesting challenges because they make plans based on children's individual needs and areas of learning. They have implemented the 'Every Child a Talker' programme, which has led to improved storytelling sessions involving use of lively voices and props. This has led to children's high levels of engagement in stories and the development of good language skills. There is an effective balance between child-initiated and adult-led activities, which enables children to choose freely and make their own decisions about their play.

Staff support babies well. For example, they place objects of interest just out of babies' reach in order for them to practise their crawling skills, as appropriate. Staff help babies to identify different body parts as they play with mirrors, pointing to and naming facial features. Staff follow toddlers' lead as they decide to select musical instruments to play

with and learn about different types of sounds. Older children use 'pretend play' well and develop a range of skills. For example, children practise their early writing skills in diaries as they record 'reported incidents', and learn to dress themselves as they put on police uniforms. Children talk to each other as they decide to take on different roles, and this promotes good language skills. Some children practise writing down numbers, although they are not clear how numbers are formed. There is scope to develop resources to extend children's recognition and understanding of numbers, so that they can use these to support their play.

Children learn to recognise their names as they arrive at the nursery, and use name cards to practise writing their names independently on their work. They also learn about letter names and sounds through daily structured sessions. Staff help children to learn about the world around them by going on nature walks along the trail in the outdoor area. They listen for sounds of birds and examine the features of living things. Children learn how to handle brushes and explore the colour and texture of paint as they make pictures. They operate electronic toys and learn how to operate simple computer programmes used to support different areas of learning. Staff play group games with the children to encourage taking turns and concentration skills. These activities help children to develop useful skills for school. Children practise a range of physical skills in the large outdoor area. They balance, ride on wheeled toys, climb and move in different ways. The outdoor area has a digging area, which enables children to explore the texture of earth and learn how things grow. Staff support children who have special educational needs and/or disabilities effectively by liaising closely with community health professionals who offer advice and information. This helps staff to plan well to meet children's specific needs.

Staff have good knowledge of where children are at in their development because they carry out regular observations and collect samples of their work. These are used to plan children's next steps for learning effectively. Staff complete progress checks and provide written summaries of children's abilities. Staff keep parents informed of their child's progress through daily interaction and through regular meetings to discuss their child's development. Parents have good opportunities to share observations of their child with staff, which informs plans for children and enables parents to contribute to their child's learning.

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

Staff have warm, caring relationships with children, and this helps them to feel happy and secure. Children have strong attachments with their key person and seek them out for comfort and reassurance. Staff find out from parents about the routines of babies, and incorporate this into their practice so that babies settle well. Photographs of babies' family members on the wall help them to feel a sense of belonging. Staff find out about all children's likes and dislikes in order to plan enjoyable activities.

Staff are good role models of how to behave safely in the nursery. For example, they teach children how to line up sensibly and to be aware of restrictions in numbers of children in certain areas of the room to avoid accidents. Staff change babies in hygienic, comfortable and private areas. Older children wash their hands independently and are

aware of why they need to do so.

Children learn to be independent. For example, they help to set the table at mealtimes, and serve themselves from communal bowls. All children have access to fresh drinking water. Children are given healthy meals, and special dietary needs are catered for. Children practise a range of physical skills in the large outdoor area and benefit from daily fresh air.

Children's behaviour is managed well by staff. Staff have clear and appropriate expectations of children's behaviour and depict this in colourful photograph cards, which are used to reinforce positive behaviour. They discuss kind ways to behave during group discussions. Children are supported well as they move to school. This is because teachers from local schools visit to observe and get to know children. Children who move group rooms within the nursery spend time in new rooms to get to know routines and staff. This helps children to settle well. Staff help children to learn about difference by talking with them about special cultural or religious events. They make craft items in celebration of these events.

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

Staff keep children protected from harm because they have good knowledge of safeguarding matters, which they put into practice effectively. For example, staff carry out daily risk assessments on all aspects of the provision to keep children safe. There is closed circuit television that is used to prevent intruder access. Management carry out thorough background checks on staff, and this supports children's safety. Staff carry out daily risk assessments on all aspects of the provision to keep children protected from harm.

Staff receive good levels of assistance to undertake their roles effectively. They are offered support, mentoring or training based on regular supervision where any issues of underperformance are readily identified. They have good skills because yearly appraisals identify training needs and a wide range of courses are attended by staff to hone their skills. For example, staff attended an 'Every Child a Talker' course to promote children's communication, language and literacy skills, and this has led to improved communication and language skills in children.

Management have implemented a series of measures to ensure that quality of the provision is maintained. For example, they regularly visit group rooms to observe and evaluate the quality of staff practice. They carry out spot checks on planning and assessment. Managers make plans to close any gaps in learning because they can readily identify where children are operating below expected levels.

There are very good links with others involved in children's care and learning. For instance, partnership with the local children's centre provides access to a range of courses and information services for parents. Links with community health professionals support children with special educational needs and/or disabilities. This ensures that their needs are well met. Partnership with parents is effective because they have good opportunities

to be involved their children's learning and are kept up to date with child's progress.

Management have good awareness of the attributes and limitations of the nursery. This is reflected in thorough evaluation involving parents, staff and children. For example, management have identified the garden area as a key priority for development in order to add further challenge and interest. Previous recommendations have been addressed, such as the implementation of a behaviour management policy to ensure consistency. The nursery demonstrates a good standard of care and education and has good ability to maintain this in the future.

The Childcare Register

The requirements for the compulsory part of the Childcare Register are	Met
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The requirements for the voluntary part of the Childcare Register are	Met
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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 action. 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	129392
Local authority	Hertfordshire
Inspection number	876164
Type of provision	
Registration category	Childcare - Non-Domestic
Age range of children	0 - 17
Total number of places	77
Number of children on roll	107
Name of provider	Sunhill Daycare (Europe) Limited
Date of previous inspection	21/02/2011
Telephone number	01442 253488 Ext11

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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, which are usually the childminder's 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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