

Cockleshell Nursery

Southend Adult Community College, Ambleside Drive, Southend-on-Sea, Essex, SS1 2UP

Inspection date	12/04/2013
Previous inspection date	15/11/2010

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

- The staff know each child very well and provide high levels of support. As a result, all children thrive and make good progress.
- Children are confident communicators as staff give a high priority to developing their speech and language skills.
- There is a strong emphasis on building trusting relationships with parents and establishing effective communication systems that help children successfully settle into the nursery.
- The staff constantly reflect on their practice and this means that there is continuous improvement in children's learning and development.

It is not yet outstanding because

- The key persons are not consistently discussing and sharing next steps in learning with parents to keep them fully informed about their children's key learning priorities.
- There is scope to improve the outdoor area to give children greater opportunities to investigate, use their imagination and discover new things through exciting first-hand experiences.

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 observed activities in the indoor and outdoor learning environments; this included joint observations with the manager.
- The inspector held discussions with the nursery management, staff and children.
- The inspector saw a sample of the children's 'learning journey' records.
The inspector saw evidence of suitability and qualifications of the staff, risk assessment, policies and procedures and other documentation in relation to health and safety checks.
- The inspector took account of the views of parents spoken to on the day and met a representative from the Southend Adult Community College.

Inspector

Patricia Champion

Full Report

Information about the setting

Cockleshell Nursery was registered in 2004 on the Early Years Register and the compulsory and voluntary parts of the Childcare Register. It operates from purpose-built, two-storey premises at the rear of Southend Adult Community College in Southend-on-Sea, Essex. It is run and managed by the Pre-School Learning Alliance. The nursery serves the local area and is accessible to all children. It operates from four playrooms and there are fully enclosed areas available for outdoor play.

The nursery employs 18 members of childcare staff. Of these, 15 staff hold appropriate early years qualifications at level 3. There is one member of staff working towards a qualification at level 2.

The nursery opens Monday to Friday all year round. Opening times are from 8am until 6pm. Children attend for a variety of sessions. There are currently 133 children attending who are within the early years age group. The nursery 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:

- extend partnership working by sharing the information about children's next steps more frequently with parents, in order to enhance individual children's learning and development

- inspire children's active learning and critical thinking by providing a rich and varied outdoor environment where they have greater opportunities to investigate, use their imagination and discover new things.

Inspection judgements

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

Children make good progress as they participate in a wide variety of experiences that effectively support their all-round learning and development. The staff have a secure understanding of how young children learn. The quality of teaching is good which means that children acquire many new skills and reach the expected level of development for

their age. The development of children's communication and language skills is given a high priority during adult-led activities. The staff consistently use skilful language and questioning to encourage children to express what they do and what they think. Interaction is successfully adapted to match children's different levels of ability. Sign language is effectively used to encourage the youngest children, or children with special educational needs, to demonstrate their needs and feelings. The staff respond sensitively to the body language and sounds that babies and toddlers make so they know that their responses are valued. Children with special educational needs and/or disabilities, or English as an additional language, receive high levels of support. Their key persons are extremely knowledgeable about each child's background and circumstances. This ensures that all children take a full and active part in all aspects of the provision.

The indoor play environment is stimulating and richly resourced. Children have ample opportunities to create and influence their own play and they are consulted about many aspects of the provision. For example, after successful fundraising, children go on outings to the shops and select new toys that ignite their interests and fascinations. As a result, children are keen to explore and make choices about what they want to do when they play inside. Planning for the outdoor environment covers all areas of learning. It gives children suitable opportunities for doing things in different ways and on different scales than when indoors. For example, children use chalk creatively to draw large scale pictures and practise their early writing skills in the playground. Despite the good overall quality of the staff's planning, it provides too few outdoor activities that really inspire children to investigate, use their imagination and discover new things. This means that not all children achieve as much as they can through outdoor play.

Assessment is used well by staff to build up a picture of individual children's progress over time. The key persons observe and support each child in making progress and effectively plan activities to meet their needs and interests. The 'learning journey' profiles provide key examples of children's work, illustrated with photographs of their achievements. The summary reports for children when they reach the age of two, successfully identify if development is less than expected and ensures that any necessary additional support is put into place without delay.

The staff introduce interesting opportunities for parents to support their children's learning at home. For example, children take home the pre-school soft toys to share in their lives and adventures. This encourages children and their parents to talk and write about what they do outside of the setting. Parents can see their children's 'learning journey' records at any time and contribute their observations of children's achievements at home. However, the staff are not regularly discussing and sharing the next steps they identify, to ensure that parents are kept fully informed about their children's key learning priorities.

Children are successfully gaining useful skills for their future lives. Early writing is encouraged through a wide range of activities with crayons and chalks. More able children use pencils to write on note pads in the role-play area. The older children recognise their names and are able to write these before leaving the nursery. Children choose to look at books for pleasure in the comfortable book areas. They enjoy stories with staff using props and creative activities to extend their understanding of the storylines. Technology skills are developed on the new computer and children are given many opportunities to

count and use numbers in everyday conversations and planned activities. The staff encourage children to gain an understanding about the world they live in. Artefacts and play resources in everyday use help to provide positive images of diversity.

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

Children are very confident and secure in the relationships they develop with the key persons caring for them. There are good settling-in procedures to ensure that children feel a sense of belonging. To help the transition from home to the nursery, children have several visits prior to starting, to help them adjust to their new surroundings, and form bonds with their key persons. Parents give plenty of information right from the start to allow the key persons to offer personalised care routines that help babies and toddlers to feel content, safe and secure. As children move onto other rooms in the nursery, the key persons pass on vital information so they continue to feel secure. Preparations for children transferring to school and other settings are well-established, leading to smooth transitions and continuity in children's care and learning.

Children behave well and enjoy each other's company. They receive plenty of praise to boost their self-esteem from the enthusiastic and caring staff. The key persons are good role models. They talk with children regularly about the importance of other people's feelings and the children are aware of what the nursery expects from each of them. Consequently, children demonstrate a real understanding of how to play harmoniously by sharing and taking turns.

A high priority is given to good hygiene practices throughout the nursery. All adults remove their shoes before entering the room where babies are crawling. Staff wear protective clothing when changing nappies and children have individual flannels and bed linen in order to minimise the risk of cross-infection. Children have healthy appetites and enjoy wholesome freshly cooked meals and nutritious snacks. In addition, the cook shares her knowledge and skills with parents by running cookery courses to enable them to provide healthy meals at home. Staff offer regular drinks to babies and older children help themselves to drinking water when they are thirsty. Children experience relaxing and sociable meal times and the provision of good quality furniture means that they sit comfortably to eat. They effectively develop their self-help skills as they competently serve their own food and babies independently feed themselves.

Children learn about healthy lifestyles as they exercise and take part in physical activities in the fresh air at designated times each day. Babies and toddlers are also given plenty of opportunities to practise and extend their developing mobility using a variety of indoor play apparatus. Children feel safe because the staff have a very good understanding of how to achieve a balance between freedom and setting safe limits. Children learn how to use play equipment responsibly and demonstrate that they know how to walk up and down stairs safely. Fire drills are regularly practised so that all children and staff know how to swiftly evacuate the premises in an emergency.

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

The nursery is effectively led and managed and the staff team work efficiently together to meet the requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage. They are clear about their roles and responsibilities and very supportive of one another, which means that sessions run smoothly. Safeguarding procedures are robust, ensuring that children are kept safe and protected from harm and neglect. For example, recruitment and vetting procedures are rigorously implemented, ensuring that all staff working in the setting are closely monitored and assessed for suitability. All staff frequently update their knowledge and understanding of child protection and a very thorough safeguarding policy is in place. The nursery is safe for children's use because the effective risk assessment process identifies and ensures that any potential hazards are minimised or removed. All necessary documents are in place to promote children's well-being, for example, information about accidents, medicines or existing injuries is recorded clearly. The majority of staff hold first aid and food hygiene certificates and the nursery kitchen has been awarded five stars for food hygiene by an environmental health officer. This means that the staff are able to confidently deal with minor injuries and prepare food safely.

The staff team have an energetic drive for continuous improvement, and constantly research best practice and share ideas with other early years settings. The nursery has successfully completed the three stages of the 'Reflecting on Quality' accreditation programme, to encourage all staff to reflect on their practice. Effective self-evaluation demonstrates an accurate awareness of the nursery's strengths and minor weaknesses, and takes into account the views of staff, parents and children. This is underpinned by regular monitoring of the teaching and the progress made by children, by a quality advisor from the Pre-School Learning Alliance. The continual professional development of staff is encouraged through attending training courses. The staff team recognise the importance of ensuring that there are no gaps in learning and both individuals and groups of children are reaching their full potential. Consequently, the nursery has recently adopted new systems for meticulously tracking and analysing more closely children's progress and achievements. The nursery manager is also very receptive to the advice and support from local authority development workers to improve practice. The recommendations identified at the last inspection have been positively addressed.

The nursery has mainly close relationships with its parents and carers. A wealth of information is displayed and parents receive newsletters about forthcoming events. Positive verbal feedback and diary sheets ensure that parents are kept informed about the care routines and the activities children take part in. The parents spoken to during this inspection say that they are delighted with the care their children receive and appreciate the flexible support offered, particularly while many are attending training courses in the college. The partnerships with local schools and other providers who care for the children are good. Staff share the relevant information with other early years professionals to promote continuity in children's learning and development. The staff also successfully secure early intervention for children with special educational needs and/or disabilities by making links with, and working alongside, other professionals, such as occupational therapists, educational psychologists, and speech and language therapists.

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 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	EY284617
Local authority	Southend on Sea
Inspection number	909529
Type of provision	
Registration category	Childcare - Non-Domestic
Age range of children	0 - 17
Total number of places	69
Number of children on roll	133
Name of provider	Pre-School Learning Alliance
Date of previous inspection	15/11/2010
Telephone number	01702 614171

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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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