

Catherine House Day Nursery School

2 Birchfield Way, Yew Tree Estate, Walsall, West Midlands, WS5 4LG

Inspection date	24/04/2013
Previous inspection date	Not Applicable

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

- Children make good progress in the friendly, safe and caring environment, developing their confidence as they are encouraged to take on responsibility in their daily routines and activities.
- Children enjoy learning through play in the well-resourced setting that offers extensive opportunities for children to engage and participate with confidence and fervour as staff identify children's different learning styles.
- Teaching is strong because staff have a good knowledge of the children's characters and abilities through observing and assessing their progress in all areas of learning.
- Partnerships with parents are very strong and innovative ideas are used to engage parents in their children's learning and development, valuing children's home backgrounds and cultures very positively.

It is not yet outstanding because

- Occasionally, the routine of the setting can slightly overshadow some children's changing moods and behaviour if, for instance, they have been sitting for some time at an activity and move to another contained activity.
- There is scope to extend the partnership working with other settings, particularly where previous contact has not been fully reciprocated.

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 throughout the nursery in both indoor and outdoor spaces, speaking and interacting with the children appropriately during the inspection.
- The inspector spoke with the nursery manager, area manager and staff at appropriate times throughout the day. Joint observations were conducted with the manager throughout the inspection.
- The inspector looked at documentation including children's records, learning and development information, staff records and a selection of policies and procedures.
- The inspector took into account the views of parents through discussion and from written questionnaires sent out by the nursery.

Inspector

Patricia Webb

Full Report

Information about the setting

Catherine House Day Nursery School was registered in 1992 and is on the Early Years Register and the compulsory and voluntary parts of the Childcare Register. It is situated in converted premises on the Yew Tree estate in Walsall, West Midlands. It is one of six settings owned by Buds Limited. The nursery serves the local area and is accessible to all children. It operates from a suite of rooms set out over two floors with stairs access to the first floor. There are fully enclosed areas available for outdoor play.

The nursery employs nine members of childcare staff. Of these, eight hold appropriate early years qualifications from level 2 to level 6. Some staff are working towards further qualifications to degree level. The setting has access to qualified teacher support.

The nursery opens from Monday to Friday, all year round, from 7.30am to 6pm. Children attend for a variety of sessions. There are currently 65 children attending who are in the early years age group. The nursery provides funded early education for two-, three- and four-year-old children and also supports children with English as an additional language.

What the setting needs to do to improve further

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

- review the flexible response to children's moods and behaviour by adapting some routines more spontaneously, further promoting children's enjoyment of their learning and development

- build on the arrangements for working in partnerships with other settings to further support consistency in children's learning and their transition to school.

Inspection judgements

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

Staff effectively use their knowledge of the Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage to plan and offer a wide variety of activities and learning experiences which support children's learning and development well. Teaching techniques are good and staff have high expectations of the children, noting individual ideas and interests and using this information to frame the planning. For example, some older, more able

children's emerging literacy skills are valued as they write their names on their place mats and sign their art work.

The varied activities offered support children's progress in all areas. There is a strong emphasis on promoting children's independence as they make choices about their play and activity. Children are confident, articulate and engage well with each other and with the adults. Their communication skills are supported well as the staff use a range of systems for promoting this. For example, staff maintain eye contact with younger babies, chatter animatedly with them and use facial expressions effectively to engage their attention. Resources, such as mirrors, are used frequently to extend babies' and toddlers' self-awareness. Babies enjoy making marks in the various media offered including mashed potato play. Staff sit closely with the babies to promote a sense of security as they play and dabble in the messy play. Staff are also aware of how such activity promotes babies' physical development and co-ordination.

Older children engage in complex conversations and are confident speakers. Some children attending the setting are from families where English is an additional language, although all the children are proficient in English. Excellent use is made of resources, such as newspapers and periodicals available in family and community languages, as well as English, for children to use in their role play. This values and respects all family backgrounds and cultures within the setting. On occasions, the setting works with overseas students who are completing similar early years courses and share their languages with the children. For example, a German student is preparing a set of songs and rhymes in her home language to share with children and staff.

Staff extend and challenge the children through effective questioning and thought-provoking activities. When preschool children line up preparing for outdoor play, they are all able to count competently. The member of staff extends a more able child by asking the child to calculate how many more children need to join the line of five to make up the eight for the activity. The child takes her cue from the fingers held up by the member of staff and responds confidently and correctly by sight without the need to rote count the fingers.

Children delight in accessing outdoor play both in the garden and in the roof garden where they get a different perspective on their environment. They plant, grow and harvest a range of produce, making vegetable soup from their efforts, success due in part to the addition of the children's own compost. They understand the growing process and life cycles through such activities and by exploring for bugs and insects. The bug garden is now extended to offer a 'bug hotel' as they prepare the pallets and 'hidey holes'. Children are preparing their own building site on the roof garden, as they amass the necessary tools and equipment, such as spirit levels and measuring tapes. They draw up their plans and book in the various building materials they will need to order for the job. They inform visitors that the black and yellow tape is there for safety reasons and that hard hats must be worn. This activity was planned intuitively by staff following assessment of children's early literacy skills. In particular, staff were keen to extend the engagement of boys in early writing for a purpose. This demonstrates how observation and assessment is used effectively to monitor children's progress. Some staff and trainees are being supported further in developing their skills in this area to ensure a consistent system is effective in

tracking children's progress.

There is a strong emphasis on developing children's self-esteem and sense of responsibility. Older children take their daily roles very seriously, explaining to visitors what they have to do when they are appointed as room 'leader' or 'cleaner'. Such practice contributes to children developing their independence and confidence, particularly in preparation for the next big steps in their lives, such as the move to school. Although the planning is flexible, occasionally there are times when the daily expected routine is followed without full consideration of children's moods. For example, children may be seated for some time at lunch, particularly when visitors are present. For some of the younger children in the group, sitting down again for a quiet story is not the best option as they fidget and are eager to engage in more active play. Staff respond when senior staff point this out. Again, during song time with toddlers, the nappy changing routine interrupts a child's wonderful engagement in a favourite action song of 'The grand old Duke of York'.

Parents are actively involved in their children's learning and development in innovative ways. They share their children's achievements from home and are encouraged to borrow toys and resources to use at home. They attend parents evenings, being given the opportunity to participate in some of the play activities their children enjoy. This gives an insight into the learning that takes place through play. Parents and carers also enjoy opportunities to join their children for some lunch time sessions as they all sit together and enjoy the meals, observing their children's developing independence. Many parents express surprise at exactly what their children can do at nursery, such as setting the table and serving their own meals with care.

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

Children settle quickly on arrival in the setting. They are greeted with soothing music playing in the entrance, helping children to become calm and ready to engage in active play. Staff support children as they move through the setting as they are familiar with the stable staff team. They relate very positively to their key persons, seeking them out for reassurance, particularly when strangers are present. This promotes their sense of belonging and emotional security. Staff are playful with the children, using praise and encouragement effectively to support children's participation in activities. For example, a child in the toddler group is rather tentative in attempting to walk over the crates in the garden. The member of staff gently encourages and coaxes the child to hold her hand and complete the task. The child does this a number of times, reaching out for the reassuring hand of the adult. Gradually, she builds the child's confidence so that he attempts the task without holding, but is still reassured by her presence. Eventually, great celebration is had as the child successfully completes the 'course' totally unaided and blossoms with pride as he takes the final jump down on his own. Children hone their physical skills as they pull themselves up the climbing frame, balance across the wooden bridge and dig vigorously in their search for bugs and insects. They watch the various animals that visit the garden and are planning to create a 'camouflaged hide' to secretly spot the various birds.

Children's health and well-being is firmly promoted through well-practised routines. They make connections between hand washing and messy play as staff offer gentle reminders and use pictorial prompts to reinforce personal care. Babies have their hands washed and wiped after nappy changes as staff start from this early age to reinforce good hygiene and minimise the spread of infection. Children's health is further promoted as they enjoy the freshly cooked meals and snacks that take account of any specific dietary or medical needs and preferences with due diligence. The setting offers a meat-free menu and parents speak positively about how their children enjoy the meals. Babies are very effectively supported in gaining self-feeding skills as they have their own spoon to practise with as staff assist their feeding.

Children's safety is a high priority and staff encourage children to use space, equipment and resources with care and diligence. Children's behaviour is managed effectively by staff. They encourage older children to consider the consequences of their actions on others and this contributes to children making better choices about how they interact and behave. Babies are supported in building relationships with each other by staff who are aware of how self-involved young children can be. Parents are supported in managing transient stages of behaviour, such as biting and tantrums, to ensure that such phases are overcome swiftly and sensitively.

Children develop an awareness of the diversity in the community. They have visitors into the setting to talk about their jobs and interests and plans are in place for the local vicar to visit to make connections with the nearby church. There is a wide selection of toys and resources to support diversity and differences in society. Children access dual language books, sing songs in other languages and participate in some elements of Makaton sign language, extending their understanding of different ways of communicating. Some teachers from other schools visit to observe the children and discuss progress, to aid transition. Staff as yet have not developed how children's transition can be further enhanced, for example, using items of school uniform in dressing-up and taking photos of areas within the early years department of the school, so that children become more familiar.

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

The management team works well together to ensure that the regulatory requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage are fulfilled. Comprehensive policies and procedures underpin the good practice. Staff are confident as they are familiar with the key policies and undertake training as required to keep abreast of changes to requirements and frameworks. They are confident in their knowledge of the safeguarding procedures in order to protect children and take the appropriate action in the event of any concerns. The organisation has rigorous and robust recruitment procedures in place to assess the suitability of all adults working with the children. Risk assessments are carried out with rigour, covering all aspects of the provision. Staff take any necessary steps to minimise the risk of hazards to children.

There are systems in place to monitor staff practice and encourage staff to reflect on their practice. The manager regularly carries out peer observations and checks staff's observation and assessment records for consistency and accuracy. Where any information is not clear, such as next steps being a little vague, the manager discusses with staff to ensure that they understand how each child is being supported to progress. This ensures that any minor inconsistencies are addressed swiftly. The setting is currently reviewing its self-evaluation process to take account of changes in the teaching and the current framework. The views of all concerned are sought, including staff, parents and children. The management endeavours to forge effective partnerships with other settings to promote consistency in children's learning and progress. The setting is not as successful in embedding these partnerships in instances where the approach has not been fully reciprocated. The reviewed self-evaluation identifies this as an area for further development to further support consistency in children's learning and their transition into school.

Parents speak fondly about the way in which the staff support their children in the setting. They trust the practice to meet the needs of their children and know that they are well-cared for and settled. They appreciate the opportunities to join their children in activities and discuss their child's progress with key persons. The setting has just started to complete the progress check at age two and parents are being invited in to discuss these summaries that refer to children's personal, social and emotional development, their acquisition of communication and language skills and their physical development. This reassures parents that any concerns regarding these prime areas of development would be identified and supported with timely intervention where necessary. This minimises the risk of any child being left behind as the uniqueness of each child's character is promoted and valued.

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	255135
Local authority	Sandwell
Inspection number	909272
Type of provision	
Registration category	Childcare - Non-Domestic
Age range of children	0 - 17
Total number of places	50
Number of children on roll	65
Name of provider	Buds Limited
Date of previous inspection	not applicable
Telephone number	01922 613211

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Type of provision

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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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Piccadilly Gate
Store St
Manchester
M1 2WD

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