

Sunbeams Pre-School

Bedwell Crescent, STEVENAGE, Hertfordshire, SG1 1NA

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| Inspection date | 16/04/2013 |
| Previous inspection date | 29/01/2011 |

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| The quality and standards of the early years provision | This inspection: | 3 |
| | Previous inspection: | 2 |
| How well the early years provision meets the needs of the range of children who attend | | 3 |
| The contribution of the early years provision to the well-being of children | | 3 |
| The effectiveness of the leadership and management of the early years provision | | 3 |

The quality and standards of the early years provision

This provision is satisfactory

- Generally, the organisation of resources and activities enables children to participate in a broad range of new experiences, such as digging for worms in the garden.
- Staff provide a warm and caring environment. This helps children to settle quickly because of the trusting relationship developed between them, staff and parents. This enables children to feel safe and secure.
- Children are becoming independent as they are supported and encouraged by staff. For example, children are encouraged to pour their own drinks during snack time.

It is not yet good because

- The provider has failed to inform Ofsted of the changes to the hours during which childcare is provided. Although this has little impact on children, it is a breach of the safeguarding and welfare requirements.
- Activities are not always suitably organised to match the needs and stage of development of some of the younger two-year-old children. This means that on occasions, they quickly lose interest and miss out on learning opportunities.
- Staff do not provide enough opportunities for younger children to learn together and from each other. This means that they are not being fully encouraged to develop skills which help them to form positive relationships within their peer groups.

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.

Inspection activities

- The inspector observed activities both in the hall and in the garden.
- The inspector carried out a joint observation and had discussions with the pre-school manager.
- The inspector sampled a selection of the group's policies and procedures. She also looked at details of staff's suitability.
- The inspector examined planning documents and a selection of children's learning journals and their personal records.
- The inspector spoke to some of the pre-school staff.
- The inspector took into account the views of the parents spoken to on the day and their response to questionnaires.

Inspector

Suman Willis

Full Report

Information about the setting

Sunbeams Pre-School was registered in 2002 on the Early Years Register. It is one of three Sunbeams groups in Stevenage, Hertfordshire. The pre-school operates from the Bedwell Community Centre. The pre-school has use of one of the main halls, a small kitchen with storage areas, and toilets. All children share access to a secure, part-covered enclosed outdoor area.

The pre-school employs eight staff, of whom seven hold appropriate early years qualifications and the other is working towards a qualification. Two members of staff hold an Early Years foundation degree and another is working towards it. The pre-school is open on Monday to Friday each week during the school term, from 12.30pm to 3.30pm. Children attend for a variety of sessions.

There are currently 31 children attending who are in the early years age group. The pre-school provides funded early education for two-, three- and four-year-old children. The pre-school supports children with special educational needs and/or disabilities and children who speak English as an additional language. The pre-school is a member of the Learning Alliance Group.

What the setting needs to do to improve further

To meet the requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage the provider must:

- notify Ofsted of any changes to the hours during which childcare is provided
- reflect on the different ways that children learn and use this information in practice. This refers to the organisation of both adult-led and child-initiated activities, particularly for younger children, so that their interest is sustained and they enjoy learning and exploring.

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

- encourage children to learn together and from each other by providing opportunities for them to work together, for example, in small groups.

Inspection judgements

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

The pre-school provides an educational programme which covers all areas of learning. Children make steady progress because next steps are suitably identified through observations and assessments. Staff use these sufficiently to inform planning. However, staff do not always engage and support children enough in their play and learning, to keep them interested. For example, children enjoy the tactile experience of rubbing their hands and other objects across the table covered with baby lotion. However, the learning intention is lost because there are no adults at the table to talk about what the children are experiencing. This means that children are not always motivated to try new experiences which provide challenge and therefore, opportunities are not always used effectively to extend their learning and development.

Children participate in a broad range of child-initiated activities and staff generally extend their thinking skills by asking open-ended questions. For example, children are encouraged to search for worms and other items in the garden as they dig the soil. They are given time to describe what they have found, such as, pasta, and count how many. Children's independence is promoted as they move freely between indoor and outdoor activities. Ample resources are readily available and children enjoy developing their understanding of the world as they play with small world toys, such as, arranging small furniture in the doll's house and taking 'babies' out for walks in prams. Children have access to keyboards and other technical resources. For example, they engage in pretend conversations as they wander round talking on the telephone. Some children enjoy storytime and are animated because staff provide props, such as, puppets. They enjoy repeating familiar words in their favourite stories as they listen with interest. However, children spend most of the time playing alongside each other and rarely engage in co-operative play because they have limited opportunities to work in small groups. Staff are suitably deployed and generally join in children's play and extend their interest and learning by offering praise and encouragement.

Staff make frequent observations of children, which are used reasonably well to identify the next steps in their learning and plan activities based on their individual stage of development. Children's learning journals suitably record their progress and how their learning is being promoted. Parents are invited to contribute to their child's learning and observations made by them at home are included in their journals. This enables staff to carry out an accurate progress check at age two years. This summarises for parents their child's development and is used to identify any additional support, if needed. Children are being suitably prepared for their next stage of learning as they continue to make satisfactory progress relevant to their age and stage of development.

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

Children are happy and settled because of valuable information parents provide. Parents comment that staff work closely with them to help children settle with ease. This enables

children to feel secure and develop attachments with familiar adults. The pre-school works closely within the community and has links with the local schools. This helps to support children's transition to either nursery or school.

Children are becoming confident and show this as they arrive and move onto their chosen activity. Upset children settle with ease as they are supported by their key person and comforted in a quiet cosy area. Children are becoming independent as they hang their coats on their hooks upon arrival. They enjoy moving freely between the indoor and outdoor area selecting their play materials. There are ample good quality resources for children to engage in their chosen activities. They are also encouraged to access other resources safely from the storage area. For example, one child wants the train set and independently goes to the large cupboard and brings out the box. His interest is fully sustained as he builds the train track and enjoys playing with trains.

Play is mainly free-flow and staff are at hand to support children. Behaviour is suitably managed by staff as they offer children alternative toys or distract them by engaging them in other activities. Children mostly behave well but on occasions they find it difficult to share and take turns because they are not given enough opportunities to participate, for example, in small group activities which encourage turn taking and listening to others.

Children's understanding of safety is appropriately promoted as they are reminded of the areas in which bikes and scooters are to be used. Staff give clear reasons about the dangers of crashing scooters against low walls and children learn to ride safely around poles. Children take exercise daily as they routinely play in the garden and use ride-on toys with confidence. Activities, such as football, are also provided and children enjoy developing their throwing and kicking skills. They show delight as they are rewarded for kicking the ball in the right direction and want to continue. Children manage their own personal hygiene well, as they independently take themselves to the toilet to wash their hands after messy activities. They enjoy the social occasion of sitting at the table for snacks and help themselves to pieces of fruit and vegetables together with bread sticks and dips. Some competently pour their own drinks while others are supported to help themselves.

Staff work closely with parents to ensure that children's dietary needs and food allergies are suitably managed. Parents are fully supported by staff in meeting children's personal needs, such as working together during toilet training. This consistent approach builds confidence in enabling children to manage their own personal hygiene.

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

The management team continue to develop self-evaluation and demonstrate a sound understanding of evaluating their practice. They acknowledge that the pre-school needs to improve and have developed an action plan which shows how they are managing this. The new manager who previously ran one of the other Sunbeams settings has been brought back in and she has a clear plan for improvement to benefit children. She is fully supported by the two group leaders who oversee the running of all three groups. Support

is also being provided by the local authority to help the group implement changes. Parents are encouraged to share their views about the care their children receive as they complete questionnaires. This means that evaluation takes into account the views of all those involved in the care of children.

All staff are supported by managers and have a sound understanding of their roles and responsibilities. Procedures to identify staff members underperformance are implemented. Staff's professional development is encouraged and highlighted through regular monitoring, supervision and annual appraisals. Regular meetings ensure that everyone is familiar with the running of the group and issues around welfare and children's needs are discussed to offer continuity of care. The manager is beginning to monitor planning and assessment and the educational programme. However, these are not rigorous enough to ensure that children consistently enjoy learning and are always sufficiently challenged.

All staff and the management team understand their roles and responsibilities to ensure that the provision meets the safeguarding and welfare requirements. However, they have failed to inform Ofsted of the change in hours during which childcare is provided. This is a safeguarding and welfare requirement, however the breach has no impact on children's safety. All staff and others connected with the group are suitably vetted to ensure that they are safe to be around children. Their knowledge of safeguarding children is sound and their policy and procedure is in line with the Local Safeguarding Children Board guidelines. Policies and procedures are reviewed appropriately and shared with parents to ensure that everyone understands them.

There are well-established partnerships with parents and other early years providers. Information about children's individual needs are appropriately shared with those involved in the children's care to ensure children are supported. Partnerships with external agencies and others satisfactorily meet the diverse needs of all children. Procedures for seeking additional support for children with special educational needs and/or disabilities and for children who have English as an additional language are suitably implemented, should the need arise. This helps ensure that all children's needs are suitably met and they make adequate progress.

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

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| Unique reference number | EY100973 |
| Local authority | Hertfordshire |
| Inspection number | 889802 |
| Type of provision | |
| Registration category | Childcare - Non-Domestic |
| Age range of children | 0 - 5 |
| Total number of places | 32 |
| Number of children on roll | 31 |
| Name of provider | Katherine Taylor |
| Date of previous inspection | 29/01/2011 |
| Telephone number | 07814 041 457 |

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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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