

Skylark Nursery School

Seale-Hayne, Newton Abbot, Devon, TQ12 6NQ

Inspection date

19/06/2013

Previous inspection date

20/01/2011

The quality and standards of the early years provision

This inspection:

1

Previous inspection:

3

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

- Staff are highly motivated and promote children's ongoing development extremely well, which ensures that each child's needs are fully met.
- Children enjoy a wealth of varied and highly appealing learning experiences that encourage them to learn and develop rapidly.
- Staff build excellent relationships with all children and their parents alike. This enhances children's all round development exceptionally well.
- Staff enable all children to be enthusiastic and motivated learners, which contributes significantly towards the excellent progress they make.

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 compulsory part of the Childcare Register. This report includes a judgment about compliance with the requirements of that register.

Inspection activities

- The inspector talked to staff and the owner/manager.
- The inspector observed children involved in a variety of activities.
- The inspector sampled some documentation.
- The inspector gained the views of a number of parents.

Inspector

Linda Dawe

Full Report

Information about the setting

Skylark Nursery School registered at its current premises in 2010. It is privately owned and operates from a self-contained building in the grounds of Seale Hayne, near Newton Abbot. It has sole use of the building during its opening hours. There is an enclosed outside play area. The nursery operates from Monday to Friday 8.30am to 4pm during school term times only. Sessions are flexible and children can attend for the day or part of the day, to suit parent's requests. Children attending for a session can stay over the lunch period and bring a packed lunch.

On Mondays and Tuesdays, children the nursery runs Forest School sessions at Stover Country Park, these operate from 9.30am to 1.30pm and on Fridays children attend a Forest School at Heatree Activities Centre. In addition, other sessions such as yoga, Musikgarten, drumming, singing and storytelling are offered.

The nursery is registered on the Early Years Register and the compulsory part of the Childcare Register. There are currently 47 children on roll, some in part-time places. All children who attend are in the early years age range. The nursery provides funded early education sessions for two-, three- and four-year-old children.

The owner, who leads all the sessions, holds a Montessori Certificate in Early Years Education and is a qualified Forest School leader at level 3. She is supported by seven additional staff, all of who have a range of appropriate qualifications and experience.

What the setting needs to do to improve further

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

- maintain and develop current systems for self-evaluation, focusing on the most effective ways of involving children and parents in the process.

Inspection judgements

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

All children are enabled to make excellent progress in their learning as a result of the skilled practitioners who provide rich learning experiences for them. Staff have an excellent knowledge of how children learn and develop and know each child in their care extremely well. Consequently, they are able to provide activities to extend each child's learning and development at an appropriate level for that child.

The enthusiastic staff team engage children and as a result, children are well motivated and eager to join in with the activities available to them. There is a sensitive balance of adult-led and child-initiated activities. Some sessions are structured where children are encouraged to practice their emerging writing and mathematical skills. At other times this teaching is more subtle, for example, children are encouraged to sound out the letters that form words as they play a group game together. Staff are aware of children's individual abilities and ensure that more able children are provided with sufficient challenge to motivate them and progress their learning. They are also aware of the different learning styles of children, boys and girls, for example and naturally encompass this within sessions. For example, boys who are reluctant to 'write' using pens and pencils, are provided with sticks to draw in the mud and paintbrushes to make marks on walls with water.

Staff provide children with excellent opportunities to learn about the world in which they live. They explore nature close-up in the nursery garden where they have planted a bee garden, have a 'bug hotel' and a vegetable patch. Staff teach children to care for the environment as they recycle their food waste by putting it in a bucket for the pigs to eat and to use water sparingly as they play. Children regularly walk through the grounds of Seale Hayne and are given hands-on experiences of the animals kept there. As the site is also home to a facility for young adults with special education needs and/or disabilities children quickly become very accepting of diversity. Staff are able to answer questions that are naturally raised such as 'why is that man in a wheelchair?' In addition, children are provided with copious opportunities to learn about and respect a variety of cultures, religions and lifestyles. They have great fun trying to use chopsticks to eat the noodles and Kai-lan (Chinese broccoli) that they have grown in the garden. Staff also teach children Mandarin, a Chinese dialect, which gives them skills for future learning as they get to grips with a new language. Staff provide a highly inclusive environment where children of all ages and abilities are able to play and learn together.

Children clearly love the music making sessions where they learn a sense of rhythm and rhyme as they beat the drums and sing songs together. They laugh with great hilarity as they play a 'fishing game' together when children catch the 'smelly boot' rather than a 'fish'. Staff enable children to develop good problem solving skills, for example, they encourage and praise them for making a trench in the mud so that the water can go down it rather than flood the path. As a result of the excellent partnerships with parents, children's learning is cohesive between home and school. For example, parents are able to borrow some of the nursery's resources to support their children's learning at home and children to borrow books to take home. All parents say they are very aware of what their child is doing and carry this on at home, for example, children planted a bean and each child took this home to continue to watch the roots form.

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

Staff pay extremely high regard to children's emotional well-being. They know how important it is to children's learning that they feel safe and secure. The key person system, where each child is assigned a member of staff, works very well in practice. Due

to the small and consistent staff team all children get to know each member of staff very well. Staff are extremely sensitive to children's individual emotional needs and as a result make sure that they all are settled and happy. Quiet areas are available where children can sit and be read to, either by staff or their parents or grandparents, which helps them to become familiar with their surroundings. Children receive constant praise and encouragement from staff, which means their confidence grows and allows them to flourish. Staff provide very good role models for the children. They have high expectations of children's behaviour, and children respond well to gentle reminders when 'rules' are breached. For example, if they put their feet on the snack table when outside or forget to say please and thank you. Children are familiar with nursery routines, which help them to feel secure. They all know to remove their shoes when they arrive, for example. As children take part in a wide range of activities delivered by people from outside the nursery, they become extremely competent at managing different social situations and display increasing confidence. Strong friendships between children are apparent as they play together in both small and large groups. All children are excellent at taking turns and praising each other for their achievements. This prepares them very well for their eventual move to school.

Staff teach children how to develop healthy lifestyles. They spend considerable amounts of time outside in the fresh air, growing organic vegetables and fruit that they pick and eat, either straight from the plant or cooked for snack. Children go to Forest school sessions where lots of learning takes place in the outdoors. Children are taught to wash their hands before eating, after playing in the mud or using the toilet and the reasons why. In addition, they take part in a very wide range of planned activities inside the nursery such as yoga and dance sessions that encourage them to enjoy physical activity and understand the benefits of this on their bodies.

Children play and learn in an exceptionally well-organised environment. There are a multitude of different areas within the nursery building and garden for children to play and learn. There is an excellent range of resources to encourage all areas of their learning and development. Children are able to freely choose from the range on offer. For example, one room provides a wealth of high quality Montessori equipment, another area provides ample space for children to take part in dance and yoga sessions, whilst another area is well equipped with toys and resources to develop their imaginations. In addition, Forest school sessions provide another set of challenging experiences for children.

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

The owner/manager is a highly motivated leader and practitioner who is dedicated to ensuring that each child in her care reaches their maximum potential. She employs a team of highly experienced and enthusiastic staff who have a variety of qualifications and experiences that compliment one another to ensure children have a wealth of valuable experiences. The regular staff team get together at the end of each day to evaluate and monitor their practice, discuss individual children's needs and to make plans for the future. They work extremely well together and form a cohesive team, which means that each of

them knows every child's needs exceptionally well. This enables them to make plans for each child to ensure that they make the best possible progress in all areas of their learning and development. In addition, the owner/manager is proactive in employing the services of others to provide children with an extremely wide variety of learning opportunities. This also means that children get to work with a variety of adults who have different teaching styles, which prepares them very well for when the time comes for them to move onto school.

Staff are given regular opportunities to develop their professional practice in line with identified areas for development for the nursery. For example, by seeking advice and support from a local husbandry firm to help develop their outdoor area so that it is an even richer learning environment for children. Although the outdoor area within the nursery already provides a extremely well resourced space for children to play and learn in, plans are in place to provide children with an all-weather shelter. In addition, staff have updated their safeguarding training to provide them with an up-to-date understanding of what they should do if they have concerns about any child in their care. Children's safety is a high priority and all risks are evaluated. This means that children are able to play in environments where they are able to take risks and learn how to keep themselves safe. Staff have devised an appropriate set of boundaries for children to adhere to in order to keep them safe. All staff undergo appropriate checks regarding their suitability.

Staff build excellent partnerships with parents and work extremely closely with them to ensure that children's individual needs are fully met. They share valuable information with parents at the end of each day with more formal information on their child's learning being given to parents at the end of term. Parents are welcomed to become fully involved in all aspects of their child's learning and nursery life. They are welcome, and encouraged, to stay with their child until their child feels safe and settled. Parents often come to observe activities such as the storytelling session to enable them to understand what their children do at nursery. Parents make comments such as 'staff really complement my parenting', they are 'excellent', they know my child 'extremely well and are very sensitive to her needs'. Parents are extremely positive about the care and learning that their children receive at nursery and many travel considerable distances so that their child can attend. Some parents have chosen to keep their children at the nursery until the end of the Early Years Foundation Stage rather than send them to school.

Building links with schools that children go onto is a challenge for staff as they cover a wide geographical area. They have built some very good links with some local schools. They use their effective relationships with parents to extend this to other schools that children with attend, sharing and seeking information to make children's move a positive one this way. In addition, staff are proactive in seeking additional support from other professionals for children should it be necessary, in partnership with parents. Parents' and children's views are regularly sought and the staff are currently considering a more formal way of extending this, through the use of a questionnaire. They have not fully considered how, or if, they would involve children in this process.

The Childcare Register

The requirements for the compulsory 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	EY411661
Local authority	Devon
Inspection number	816374
Type of provision	Full-time provision
Registration category	Childcare - Non-Domestic
Age range of children	2 - 8
Total number of places	30
Number of children on roll	47
Name of provider	Felicity Jane Marshall
Date of previous inspection	20/01/2011
Telephone number	01626 325800

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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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Piccadilly Gate
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