

Elms Day Nursery

33 Edgbaston Park Road, Edgbaston, BIRMINGHAM, West Midlands, B15 2RS

Inspection date	15/07/2013
Previous inspection date	24/02/2011

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

- Children are highly motivated and enthusiastic learners. The very successful key person system enhances the relationship with children and their families extremely well. This means that children develop very secure and trusting relationships with their key person, and other nursery practitioners.
- Practitioners have an excellent knowledge of how children learn. Great care is taken to ensure that learning is exciting and captures children's interests. The expectations of children's achievements are high in all areas of their learning and development. As a result, children thrive and flourish in this setting and make the best possible progress towards the early learning goals.
- Practitioners provide rich, varied and imaginative experiences for children. Planning and assessment is precise and seen as integral in supporting children's individual interests and next steps in their learning. Close monitoring of the educational programmes is evident to maintain the highest level of achievement for all children.
- The management team and practitioners show a very strong commitment to improving outcomes for all children. There are highly successful systems in place to evaluate all aspects of the provision to inform continuous improvement, leading to exceptional practice that is worthy of dissemination to other settings.
- There is an excellent focus on play and learning in the outdoor area. Children access a very wide range of equipment and natural resources, and this enables them to develop many new skills. Children like being able to direct their own play, make decisions and explore for themselves, particularly in the forest school area.

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 all playrooms and the outside learning environment, and observed practitioners and children during a forest school activity.
- The inspector talked to practitioners and children, and held meetings with the Childcare Services Coordinator, deputy manager and the Early Years Foundation Stage lead practitioner.
- The inspector carried out a joint observation with the deputy manager.
- The inspector looked at a wide range of documentation, including children's assessment records and planning documentation.
- The inspector checked evidence of suitability and qualifications of practitioners who work with children, and looked at a range of policies and procedures.
- The inspector took account of the view of parents and carers spoken to on the day, and from information included in the setting's own parent survey.

Inspector

Jacqueline Nation

Full Report

Information about the setting

Elms Day Nursery was registered in 1993 on the Early Years Register and the compulsory and voluntary parts of the Childcare Register. It operates from a Grade 2 listed building in the Edgbaston area of Birmingham, and is owned by the University of Birmingham. The nursery serves the university staff, students and the wider community. There is an enclosed area available for outdoor play. The nursery is open Monday to Friday, all year round, except for bank holidays. Opening times are from 7.55am until 6.20pm. Children attend a variety of sessions.

Currently, there are 220 children on roll, all of whom are within the early years age range. The nursery provides funded early education for two-, three- and four-year-old children. The nursery employs 35 practitioners; of these 34 hold appropriate early years qualifications to level 3 or above. There are three management staff and an advisory teacher. Two practitioners have Early Years Professional Status, and two hold Qualified Teacher Status. The nursery supports a number of children with special educational needs and/or disabilities, and those who speak English as an additional language. The nursery is a member of the National Day Nurseries Association and the Birmingham Play Care Network. It also receives support from the local authority.

What the setting needs to do to improve further

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

- enhance the already excellent strategies for supporting children's well-being by introducing lullabies that children know from home in their own languages, and share them with other children in the nursery.

Inspection judgements

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

Children make excellent progress in all areas of their learning and development. Practitioners are enthusiastic and highly committed. They provide children with a broad range of stimulating and exciting play and learning experiences. The very well-resourced learning environment and practitioners' secure knowledge of children's next steps in their learning help to ensure that every opportunity is made to support children's excellent progress across all areas of learning. Teaching techniques are strong across the nursery, and systems to assess children's starting points on entry are exceptionally secure. Practitioners have an excellent understanding of how children learn. They use their observations to make precise assessments of children's progress, and plans clearly specify details about children's individual next steps in their learning. Practitioners are committed

and dedicated in their roles. They clearly enjoy working with children, and their families to ensure all children make outstanding progress in their learning, and learn skills to help them in the future. Parents and carers are encouraged to be actively involved in their child's learning at home and share information about children's achievements. Children's progress is clearly recorded in their learning journey record. This provides parents and carers with a very accurate overview of their child's enjoyment and achievements, together with a progress check at age two.

Children are active learners and participate very enthusiastically in all activities. They make full use of their time, moving freely as they participate in activities they enjoy. Children have an excellent learning environment where meticulous use of space and attention to detail ensures every area is used to promote children's learning. This is very evident in all playrooms, with some rooms having direct access to the outdoor play space. For example, children in the baby room have free-flow access to their own outdoor area where they can safely explore and investigate. All children are making very good progress in their physical development because the outdoor play spaces overall are excellent. Children show their skills pedalling bikes, they love the water play equipment and they dig in sand and make marks on the chalkboards. In the larger garden, they can climb up hills, crawl through tunnels and make dens. Children have a fantastic time in the inspiring forest school area and benefit from practitioners training and excellent teaching techniques. Practitioners fully capture and enhance children's imaginative skills, and foster their unique and detailed interest in mini-beasts. Children listen intently as practitioners introduce a chasing game, and a story about 'dragons'. Children talk about what they might see, and what they could do as they enter the forest school area. For example, children talk about 'having a good idea' or maybe 'running away from the dragon'. They explore the area with great delight, and find a 'dragons cave' and an 'egg'. Some children love to hunt for mini-beasts, turning over logs to find woodlice, and searching for ant hills. Children learn about safety as they play, and mix mud with sticks which they say looks like 'chocolate'. Practitioners show children how they can use the mud to make faces on the tree trunks, using natural resources that are around them, such as sticks, leaves and stones to make the eyes and mouth.

Children's social skills, independence and ability to communicate with others are rapidly enhanced. This is because of the consistent and very positive practitioner interaction with the children during activities. Practitioners take time to listen with genuine interest to what children say. They ask them questions to make them think and improve their understanding and learning. As a result, children develop positive attitudes to learning from a young age and flourish during their time at nursery. There are very good opportunities for all children to develop a love of books, with comfy book areas in all rooms, and engaging story times. Picture books for younger children provide valuable opportunities for them to copy and repeat words. Older children develop confidence in constructing simple sentences so that their vocabulary increases, and their speech and language develop very well. All children love to sing rhymes and action songs, particularly when visitors to the nursery involve children in energetic music and movement activities.

Children have extensive opportunities to make marks, recognise and write their name and there are frequent discussions about letters and sounds linked to their name. They have excellent access to a wide range of media to promote their skills in expressive art and

design abilities. Children love to explore the properties of sand and water, gloop, baked beans, play dough and the love to paint. Children use their imagination through role play and dressing-up, they make models using a wide range of bricks, and younger children like to build towers they can then knock down. Children are very skilfully guided by practitioners to think critically and solve problems as they play. This fosters their mathematical development very effectively. Children learn about shapes, numbers and colours, and use shape sorters, puzzles and threading resources to develop their learning through play. Children learn about volume and capacity while playing in sand and water. Babies and younger children also become absorbed in activities where they fill and empty containers.

Practitioners help children to develop an understanding of differences within society through a range of meaningful activities, and the use of resources reflecting positive images. Children learn about cultures and beliefs through very well-planned activities relating to festivals. Parents and carers are actively encouraged to share their skills with the children, and visit the nursery to talk about their cultures and traditions. Children are very effectively supported in developing their knowledge of technology. Younger children investigate electronic resources, pressing buttons to see what happens next or pretending to talk on the telephone. A robust range of resources, such as an interactive whiteboard, story headphones and computers are readily available. Children develop outstanding skills for the future. They are happy, settled and very interested to learn. As a result, they are well-prepared for the next stages in their learning and are skilfully supported in their transition into school.

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

Children are at the heart of all that happens in this setting, and they develop very close and caring relationships with their key person, and co-key person. This ensures children are happy and settled from the outset. All practitioners are very caring and sensitive to children's needs, care practices are excellent, and children are developing a strong sense of independence. Children show that they have very good relationships with practitioners and each other so they feel very safe. Younger children like to snuggle in for cuddles with practitioners, enabling them to feel secure. Excellent attention is given to settling-in visits for children. From the outset practitioners learn as much as they can about the children in their care through their interactions with parents and carers during the detailed induction sessions. Practitioners recognise the uniqueness of each child, and that for some children separation from their parents and carers can be quite difficult. The arrangements for each family are flexible to ensure children have time to become familiar with their playroom, daily routines and their key person to help them feel secure. Parents and carers are provided with opportunities to talk to practitioners at arrival and collection times. They receive feedback each day about their child's daily care routines, meals, sleep times and activities. This helps to keep them well-informed about their children's well-being. Practitioners prepare children very well for the transition which occurs as they progress through the nursery. Each child's individual needs are assessed, and the transition process adapted accordingly. Practitioners ensure that during this time each child's needs continue to be met well, which helps children to remain settled and happy at all times.

Children's well-being and safety is a priority for this nursery. Children play in a safe and secure environment. Practitioners are vigilant and supervise the children very well. An excellent emphasis is placed on children's personal, emotional and social development when they start. This focus quickly helps children develop the underpinning skills needed for their future success. Children are exceptionally well-behaved and show a very good understanding of expectations regarding behaviour. They learn about the importance of being kind to friends, helping to tidy away toys, listening to others, and to share and take turns during play. Children receive plenty of praise and encouragement from practitioners, this helps to boost their confidence and self-esteem.

Partnerships with parents and carers are excellent. The setting places great value in ensuring that parents and carers develop a sense of belonging to the setting, and have a say in the care and well-being of their children. Consultation meetings with parents and carers ensure they are kept fully informed about the progress their children are making, and workshops are arranged to help them be involved in their child's learning at home. Topics cover different aspects of learning, such as music and movement, creative activities, forest school and the new innovative concept of 'Loose parts'. This shows parents how children in the nursery use a wide range of recycled items, materials, and objects in a creative and imaginative way as children move, adapt, and manipulate them within their play.

Inclusive practice is very successful as practitioners have an excellent knowledge of each child's background and individual needs. Excellent provision is in place to secure timely intervention and for children with additional needs to ensure they achieve well. This is supported by well-established multi-agency links, which provide extensive access to specialist knowledge, skills and resources. Children who speak English as an additional language are supported very effectively in the nursery. Practitioners work closely with parents and carers, and find out some key words and phrases in their own language to help them settle. Home languages and cultural backgrounds are highly valued and respected. This helps to ensure that everyone feels included in the life of the nursery. There is scope to further enhance the already excellent strategies for supporting children's well-being by introducing lullabies that children know from home in their own languages, and share them with other children in the nursery.

Excellent attention is given to encouraging children to adopt healthy lifestyles, and a healthy ethos is promoted at all times. Children are provided with nutritious and well-balanced meals. These are prepared by the university catering department. The menu is varied and takes into account specific dietary requirements for individual children. Children's independence is highly fostered at mealtimes as they help to set the table. Lunchtimes are extremely sociable occasions where children relax, chat, enjoy their meal and listen to soothing and calming music. Practitioners show high regard to maintaining effective hygiene practice at all times. Children follow well-established routines which help stop the spread of infection, such as hand washing.

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

Leadership and management are outstanding. They have an excellent understanding of their responsibility to meet the safeguarding and welfare requirements, and highly successful arrangements to monitor their implementation. This is a large nursery which is exceptionally well-organised. The arrangements in place to help safeguard children and promote their welfare are very well-embedded within the nursery. The management and practitioner team, and all adults working within the setting fully understand their safeguarding responsibilities to ensure children's welfare and protection. There are clear and effective procedures in place if there are any concerns raised about a child in their care, or allegations made about a practitioner.

Rigorous and robust systems are in place for the recruitment and selection of practitioners to ensure their suitability to work with children. Practitioners' ongoing suitability is supported through highly effective systems for supervision, appraisals and performance management. Excellent arrangements are in place regarding the programme for professional development, resulting in highly qualified and knowledgeable practitioners. Team work in the nursery is very strong; practitioners are caring, enthusiastic and fully committed to their roles. Children's safety is a priority. Risk assessments are thorough and ensure hazards to children are minimised. Practitioner deployment is well-managed to ensure children's safety at all times. Children's welfare is highly safeguarded as documents show a very clear record of children's attendance, and any accidents or medication. A comprehensive range of policies and procedure are in place to support the efficient management of the provision, and keep parents and carers well-informed about how the nursery operates.

Partnerships with parents and carers, and external agencies are very strong to ensure children's needs are met. Transitions for children when they move onto school are very well thought-out. The nursery has effective links with local schools, and teachers are invited to visit the nursery to meet the children before they start school. Parents and carers are provided with a wealth of information about the provision. In the entrance there is a dedicated noticeboard for parents, and termly newsletters keep them up-to-date with events at the nursery. Parents and carers can comment on the quality of the provision at any time using the online parent survey. Parents speak very highly about the nursery. They are very appreciative of the quality of provision, the support they receive and what they achieve for their children. Parents spoken to during the inspection said they are extremely happy with the nursery, and said there is excellent provision for children with special needs. Detailed feedback is provided about their child's day, and if there are any concerns they are dealt with very effectively. Some parents said they had nothing but praise for the nursery, they are very happy with their child's progress and say that practitioners make a special effort, and adapt activities to meet their child's individual interests.

Excellent methods of monitoring and self-evaluation are established. These are used very effectively to identify strengths and areas for improvement. This ensures robust, continuous improvement leading to exceptional practice that is worthy of dissemination to other settings. Leadership and management of the setting set high aspirations for quality, and this underpins all aspects of care, teaching and learning in the nursery. There is an excellent overview of the curriculum through monitoring of the educational programmes to ensure they have sufficient depth, breadth and challenge, and reflect the aptitudes and

interests of the children. Robust systems are in place to ensure the quality of teaching and learning, and the progress of children is monitored effectively. This ensures that gaps are narrowing for groups of children, and all children achieve exceptionally well given their starting points in their learning.

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	227172
Local authority	Birmingham
Inspection number	922003
Type of provision	
Registration category	Childcare - Non-Domestic
Age range of children	0 - 17
Total number of places	114
Number of children on roll	220
Name of provider	The University of Birmingham
Date of previous inspection	24/02/2011
Telephone number	0121 414 8118

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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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