

Spring Meadows

The Barclay School, Walkern Road, STEVENAGE, Hertfordshire, SG1 3RB

Inspection date	29/08/2013
Previous inspection date	06/07/2009

The quality and standards of the early years provision	This inspection:	4
	Previous inspection:	3
How well the early years provision meets the needs of the range of children who attend		4
The contribution of the early years provision to the well-being of children		4
The effectiveness of the leadership and management of the early years provision		4

The quality and standards of the early years provision

This provision is inadequate

- The key person system is ineffective. The key person does not consistently work closely with the children and parents to support children's care, learning and development needs. Therefore, children's care and learning is not tailored to meet their individual needs and their progress is not adequately supported.
- Staff have insufficient knowledge of the learning and development requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage for settings providing wrap around care Therefore, they are not able to plan activities that help children make sufficient progress in their learning.
- A number of the safeguarding and welfare requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage are not met. Therefore, children are not fully safeguarded and their welfare is not adequately maintained.
- The arrangements for the induction, supervision and appraisal of staff are insufficient as some staff do not understand their roles and responsibilities and are not adequately supported in securing opportunities for their continued professional development.
- The monitoring of practice does not clearly identify the strengths of the setting or the actions needed to tackle any areas for improvement.

It has the following strengths

- Staff are kind and caring towards the children, which results in them feeling secure and settled during their time at the setting.

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 main room and the outside area.
- The inspector looked at a selection of policies and procedures.
- The inspector spoke with the owner, staff, parents and children at appropriate times throughout the inspection.

Inspector

Susan Ennis

Full Report

Information about the setting

Spring Meadows was registered in 2009 and is on the Early Years Register and the compulsory and voluntary parts of the Childcare Register. It is situated in Barclay School in Stevenage, Hertfordshire, and is privately owned and managed. Spring Meadows serves the local area and is accessible to all children. It operates from a separate building within the school grounds and there is a fully enclosed area available for outdoor play.

Spring Meadows employs eight members of childcare staff. Of these, seven hold appropriate early years qualifications at level 2 or above.

Spring Meadows opens Monday to Friday during school holidays, from 7.50am until 6.15pm. Children attend for a variety of sessions. There are currently 10 children attending who are in the early years age group. It supports a number of children with special educational needs and/or disabilities.

What the setting needs to do to improve further

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

- develop staff's knowledge of the Statutory framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage and the procedures for identifying children's individual needs, interests and stage of development. Then, use this information to plan and provide challenging and enjoyable experiences that promote children's learning and progress
- develop the two way flow of information with parents to share ongoing information about the children's achievements at home to support children's continuity of learning
- develop appropriate arrangements for the induction, supervision and appraisal of staff to help them understand their roles and responsibilities, identify training needs and secure opportunities for continued professional development
- develop the key person system to ensure that every child's care and learning is tailored to meet their individual needs
- develop procedures for the deployment of staff to ensure that the children's safety is continually maintained
- develop a culture of mutual support, teamwork and continuous improvement to ensure that all requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage are met and support ongoing improvements to the provision for children
- promote the safety and good health of children by ensuring that staff consistently help them to understand the importance of procedures, such as washing their hands before eating and that sitting down with food prevents accident, such as choking
- ensure that staff are fully aware of the safety procedures required to minimise the risks to children. This refers to the security of the premises, building debris in the outside play area and the unsuitability of workmen walking through the space used by the children with hot drinks
- ensure that at least one person who has a current paediatric first aid certificate is on the premises at all times when children are present.

Inspection judgements

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

Staff have a lack of knowledge with regard to the learning and development requirements of the Statutory framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage for settings providing wrap around care. They do not find out about children's likes and dislikes or about what the children can and cannot do. Therefore, they do not plan and provide activities and play opportunities that are tailored to children's individual needs. For example, children with special educational needs and/or disabilities are not consistently given the support they require to enable them to play alongside their peers or to benefit from the activities taking place. Use of the setting's assessment procedures is inconsistent, leading to the next steps in children's learning being unidentified. Therefore, children's progress is not adequately supported. However, staff at Spring Meadows appreciate that the children are on holiday and generally provide them with a relaxing, mostly enjoyable environment where they can play and interact with each other. For example, younger children take great delight in painting the nails of staff with nail varnish. They tell staff that they have green and red nail varnish. They then take lilac and blue out of their pocket saying 'tricked you' enjoying the joke they have just played. They go on to talk about how long the varnish will take to dry and how cold the member of staff will get if she has to wait 18 hours as the children predict.

Staff plan some general activities that children enjoy. For example, they provide craft activities, such as pottery, to develop children's use of different materials and board games to encourage children's social skills. However, due to the lack of information gained about children's likes, dislikes and stage of development at the start of the placement, the planning of activities does not take into account children's individual needs or interests. Also due to a lack of staff knowledge and experience, children are mostly initiating the play with limited interaction from the staff to extend the children's progress.

Partnerships with parents are generally friendly and welcoming. Settling-in visits are arranged if requested and basic information about the setting's policies and procedures is made available. However, parents are not encouraged to share information about their children's learning and achievements at home. Therefore, this information cannot be used to provide staff with ongoing details to help them enhance children's learning and progress.

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

Care practices at Spring Meadows are variable and do not adequately support the children's emotional and physical well-being. For example, when children ask for some toast they are not all encouraged to wash their hands before eating it. This means that they are not consistently learning about basic hygiene routines and the reasons for them. Also, younger children help themselves to apples and grapes prepared for snack, again with unwashed hands, and then proceed to walk around eating the food, causing a potential choking hazard and affecting their safety. Children generally enjoy their

opportunities to use the outside play area. They play group games of 'catch' and football, developing their physical and coordination skills. However, the area used is not always fully suitable. For example, debris from building work completed and work men carrying hot drinks through the play area affects children's safety and welfare. Children gain some awareness of their own safety as they are reminded not to run to the toilets and that climbing on the outside tables is not safe in case they hurt themselves.

Children generally form appropriate bonds with the staff and settle well at the setting. However, due to the ineffective key person system in place and the limited amount of information sought from parents, staff do not ensure that every child's care and learning is tailored to meet their individual needs. Children are soundly supported in their preparations for their move, for example, onto senior school, as they discuss their thoughts and concerns with the staff who help them look forward to this next stage in their learning. There is a generally caring ethos between the children at the setting and all are mostly friendly and thoughtful to each other. Sensitive reminders are given by staff if the children do momentarily forget, helping them understand the consequences of their actions and how unkind comments can hurt their friends' feelings.

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

The owner has a basic understanding of the Statutory framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage welfare requirements, however, this is not consistently implemented by staff or in the day to day running of the setting. As a result, a number of safeguarding, welfare, learning and development and Childcare Register requirements is not met. On some occasions, the setting is run without adequate staff who have a paediatric first aid certificate, compromising children's safety in an emergency situation. Security of the premises is ineffective as anyone can enter the room used, completely unannounced and unidentified. Also, due to the entrance used by the parents being located away from the main play space, a member of staff needs to unlock the door each time parents arrive to collect their children. Therefore, they are removed from supervising the children and this impacts on children's safety. Some staff attend training with regard to safeguarding children and are aware of the action to take should concerns arise about children's welfare. However, due to the lack of induction procedures, the person in charge on the day of inspection was unclear of the procedures to follow, again compromising children's welfare and safety.

Currently there is too little implementation of the learning and development requirements which results in limited support for children's progress. Ineffective monitoring by the owner results in inconsistent practice and leads to children's individual needs not being adequately met. Although recruitment processes ensure that staff are suitable to work with the children, a lack of induction procedures means that some staff have a limited understanding of their roles and responsibilities. Also, as ongoing supervisions and appraisals of staff do not regularly take place, their training needs are not sufficiently identified to secure opportunities for their continued professional development, which impacts on children's learning and progress.

Sound partnerships are established with other professionals and agencies to secure appropriate interventions and support for children or families if they need it. Also, relationships with other early years settings attended by the children are positive. Many staff working at the setting also work in the school so they already know the children and this helps the children to settle and feel secure. However, partnerships with parents are ineffective as they are not fully involved in their children's learning. The owner is starting to evaluate the setting's practice and is seeking the views of staff and the parents to help her with this. However, there has been too little focus on the weaker areas of practice at Spring Meadows and this again is impacting on the running of the setting and on the children's development and welfare.

The Childcare Register

The requirements for the compulsory part of the Childcare Register are

**Not Met
(with
actions)**

The requirements for the voluntary part of the Childcare Register are

**Not Met
(with
actions)**

To meet the requirements of the Childcare Register the provider must:

- ensure that at least one person who is caring for children has an appropriate first aid qualification (compulsory part of the Childcare Register)
- ensure that the premises are safe and suitable for the children (compulsory part of the Childcare Register)
- ensure that no one can enter the premises without the knowledge of a person who is caring for the children on the premises (compulsory part of the Childcare Register)
- ensure that all necessary measures are taken to minimise any identified risks (compulsory part of the Childcare Register)
- ensure that at least one person who is caring for children has an appropriate first aid qualification (voluntary part of the Childcare Register)
- ensure that the premises are safe and suitable for the children (voluntary part of the Childcare Register)
- ensure that no one can enter the premises without the knowledge of a person who is caring for the children on the premises (voluntary part of the Childcare Register)
- ensure that all necessary measures are taken to minimise any identified risks (voluntary part of the Childcare Register).

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	EY387719
Local authority	Hertfordshire
Inspection number	879001
Type of provision	
Registration category	Childcare - Non-Domestic
Age range of children	0 - 17
Total number of places	32
Number of children on roll	10
Name of provider	Louise Anne Prior
Date of previous inspection	06/07/2009
Telephone number	0192 046 9137

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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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