

Unicorn Day Nursery

Shelsey Avenue, Whiteheath, Oldbury, B69 1BP

Inspection date	15/08/2013
Previous inspection date	05/01/2011

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

- Children are effectively safeguarded because robust systems are in place to ensure all staff have a secure knowledge and understanding of child protection procedures, which ensures they act appropriately to safeguard children.
- Staff are skilled and effective in extending and supporting learning for children aged under three years. Children continually benefit from and enjoy a variety of fun and stimulating activities and experiences. This ensures they are supported to make consistently good progress in their learning and development.
- Staff respond warmly to children showing care and consideration and they foster positive relationships between all children. As a result, children enjoy a very harmonious environment.

It is not yet good because

- Practice is not consistently good in pre-school. As a result, some children do not always have a key person assigned to them and they do not always receive the level of support they require to make good progress in their learning and development.
- Good partnership working with parents, to support children with special educational needs and/or disabilities and English as an additional language, is not embedded in all practice.
- The record of complaints is not kept up to date to ensure parents are kept fully informed of any issues that may affect the care of their children.

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 with pre-school children, children aged under two years and children aged two to three years and held discussions with the owner, manager and staff.

■ The inspector conducted two joint observations of children's activities and experiences with the manager and owner.

■ The inspector interacted with children and spoke to three parents during the inspection.

■ The inspector looked at children's daily diary sheets, assessment records and planning documentation and checked evidence of the suitability and qualifications of the staff.

Inspector

Christine Armstrong

Full Report

Information about the setting

Unicorn Day Nursery was registered in 2009 on the Early Years Register. The setting is privately owned and managed. It operates from converted clinic premises adjacent to St James Primary School in the Oldbury part of the West Midlands. The premises are all on one level with easy access. The nursery serves the local area. There is a fully enclosed play area available for outdoor play. The nursery supports several children with special educational needs and/or disabilities and who speak English as an additional language.

There are currently 100 children on roll, all of whom are within the early years age group. The nursery opens five days a week, all year round, from 7.30am and until 6pm. Children are able to attend for a variety of sessions.

The nursery employs 14 members of childcare staff. Of these, five hold early years qualification at level 5 and three are working towards level 5. The owner is a qualified teacher. The nursery receives support from the local authority.

What the setting needs to do to improve further

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

- ensure every child is always assigned a key person, who effectively tailors their learning and care, in order to meet their individual needs and to engage and support parents in guiding their child's learning at home
- take steps to provide opportunities for children to develop and use their home language in play and learning, in order to support their language development at home
- keep an up-to-date record of any complaints and their outcome.

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

- make sure systems to monitor the delivery of the educational programmes and the full implementation of all safeguarding and welfare requirements are effective, to ensure that children are always supported to make good progress in their learning and development
- ensure good practice is embedded in all practice through setting targets to improve all staff's performance, especially in relation to supporting children with special educational needs and/or disabilities, children with English as an additional language and ensuring all children's next steps in learning in pre-school are fully supported in the nursery and at home
- use mealtimes in pre-school to support children's growing knowledge of number, recognition of print, independence and understanding of healthy eating.

Inspection judgements

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

In most instances, staff promote the learning and development of children effectively. They use a number of successful strategies to engage parents to take part in their children's learning in the setting and at home. This includes holding regular workshops in the nursery with a pre-planned focus, such as creative workshops where children decorate biscuits with their parents. Written comments from parents demonstrate the 'Open mornings' run by the nursery are particularly successful in engaging parents to spend time discussing their child's achievements, next steps in learning and the type of activities they take part in at nursery. This helps to support parents to be involved in their child's

learning. The nursery has previously used many strategies to work in partnership with parents of children, who are learning English as an additional language, in order to exchange information with parents and to support children's language development in their home language. However, these strategies are not consistently engaged. As a result, all strategies are not currently being implemented to ensure children are supported to develop and use their home language in play and learning in the nursery, in order to support their language development at home. This is a breach of a welfare requirement and although, it does not have any significant direct impact on children's learning, it does affect the quality of service offered to them.

Staff are effective in extending and supporting learning for children under two years, particularly when they begin to show a natural interest and curiosity in the things they see. Staff encourage children to explore resources that stimulate their senses inside and outdoors. This includes natural resources, such as water and sand, which are also mixed together to provide children with the sensory experience of making marks in the damp sand. Staff are skilful, attentive and fully focused on encouraging children to discover new experiences and new ways of doing things. For example, a member of staff tunes into a child's non-verbal gestures to join them in playing with a soft ball. The member of staff sensitively mirrors the child's actions and adds further actions to challenge the child to use the ball to knock down some skittles. This helps to develop physical skills and increases the child's energy and fascination, which successfully maintains their focus on the activity. The member of staff supports the child's confidence with encouraging words and body language. This encourages the child to continue in their attempts to copy her actions. This helps children to learn through trial and error and to try new activities. The member of staff also supports the child's communication skills throughout the activity by mimicking the sounds the child makes. This encourages the child to continue to make sounds. She also introduces new words in context, such as 'roll' and 'go', which helps the child to develop their understanding of the meaning of words and encourages them to repeat them, which helps to build their vocabulary. This approach is embedded within the staff team, who work with this age group, which ensures very young children are effectively supported to start to become confident and self-assured, eager and motivated learners.

Staff are effective in extending and supporting learning for children aged two to three years. They plan a variety of fun and stimulating activities inside and outdoors based on children's interest and ability. For example, when children show an interest in ladybirds, staff support this by obtaining a ladybird box, which helps to attract more ladybirds into the garden for the children to observe and develop their interest. Staff also capture this interest to encourage children to draw and paint ladybird masks. This supports their physical skills in holding and using mark-making tools and this also encourages children to play and move imaginatively as ladybirds. Staff are very skilful in attracting and maintaining children's focus. This helps children to begin to pay attention to detail and to start to learn together. For example, a member of staff uses enthusiasm and a fun and playful approach to attract and maintain children's attention to play a ladybird game. She uses gestures and simple instructions and she gives children time to think and respond to questions, often adding new words to build their vocabulary. This helps children to begin to follow instructions, count and match colours and spots and develop their communications skills. This fun and skilful approach is embedded within the staff team, who work with this age group, which ensures children are developing the skills they need

for their next steps in learning. This approach is particularly helpful in supporting children, who are learning English as an additional language.

However, the quality of teaching in pre-school is variable, which means that children are not consistently challenged to make good progress. For example, during term time, children can move freely between four indoor areas, a covered outdoor area and the larger outdoor area throughout the day. Each area is themed to provide rich opportunities to support different areas of learning. For example, there is a wonderful mathematics area that is effectively resourced to provide rich opportunities for children to explore number, shape, measure and size. There is also an area that provides stimulating resources for children to learn about the wider work around them and to play imaginatively. These areas support children to initiate their own play, follow their own ideas and use resources that challenge them to think critically and to explore and experiment. This ensures the educational programmes cover the seven areas of learning.

However, when term time finishes, there is a smaller number of children and staff. During this time, children's free movement is more limited, for example, as they stay within a smaller area, such as the craft and covered outdoor area. As a result, some aspects of learning are not as well planned for or promoted. For example, there are no resources in these areas to promote children's interest and use of number or numerals and there are few opportunities for children to see and recognise print in the environment. Resources to promote children to play imaginatively and to make marks for their own purposes are on offer but they are more mundane and lack sufficient challenge. For example, the painting easel is set out with only three pots of paint containing the same colour green and only very small pieces of paper are available for children to paint on. There is a role play area set up with furniture and dressing-up clothes, but staff do not provide anything new or unusual to promote imaginative play, even though this is the focused area for planning for the week.

At all times, staff interact positively with the pre-school children. They respond warmly to children wishes and request and they engage with them in conversations. They read stories to them and sit with them as they complete jigsaws, use scissors and play in the water. During term time, children benefit from their key person planning challenging activities that are based upon accurate assessments of their skills and knowledge, in order to support them in their next steps in learning and to promote the characteristics of effective learners. However, when term time ends, these arrangements are not in place for children, who continue to attend. In some instances, children do not have a specific member of staff designated as their key person. This is a breach of a welfare requirement and although, it does not have any significant direct impact on children's learning, it does affect the otherwise good and consistent progress children are making in the nursery and the quality exchange of information with parents.

In other instances, although, the key person is present, the information collected during term time is not used as effectively. As a result, more able children are not stimulated to use and extend what they know, understand and can do. For example, children, who can recognise and write simple words, such as their name, are not encouraged to notice the words in the book that is being read to them or to think of or discuss alternative endings to the story. When they play imaginatively, they are not encouraged to introduce a

storyline or narrative into their imaginative play. During routine activities, such as dinner time, they are not supported to use their knowledge of number, measure and print in a purposeful way. This variation means that the group of children, who attend out of term time in pre-school are not always provided with an interesting and challenging learning environment and they are not always supported to continue to develop the skills they need, to start school.

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

The setting provides a welcoming environment for children, parents and visitors. There is a variety of positive images of diversity throughout the nursery, which provide a strong message that everybody is welcome. There is also a designated male toilet, which helps to support the message that father's involvement in the nursery is valued. Staff greet children as they arrive and engage in conversation and play with them, which helps them to settle well. Resources and activities are set out, which engages children to become active in play as soon as they arrive, which also helps them to settle. Displays of children's work and photographs of children at play help children to develop a sense of belonging. Children are familiar with and respond well to all staff in the setting.

In most instances, the wonderful array of resources in the different learning areas around the nursery are used well to provide quality learning experiences for children, in order to keep them motivated and engaged. Children in the baby room, particularly benefit from the high quality and good use of resources. For example, very low chairs and tables are used effectively by staff at mealtimes to enable children to become as independent as possible, which also supports their self-confidence. Pre-school children are supported well to manage their own personal needs, relative to their age and understanding, although, they are not always supported to become more independent during mealtimes. All children's dietary requirements are met in partnership with parents. The nursery has a cook, who uses mostly fresh ingredients for meals and snacks. The cook serves children's meals, but the opportunity to use this experience to help pre-school children to develop their understanding of healthy eating is not always captured by staff. Children enjoy lots of opportunities to enjoy fresh air and become active with outdoor areas leading off from all rooms, which support their good health and well-being. Throughout the nursery, extremely high focus is given to maintaining high standards of hygiene, which also contributes to supporting children's good health. The nursery has achieved a maximum five star rating following an environmental health inspection.

In all situations, staff respond warmly to children showing care and consideration. They mostly focus well on supporting children to embrace new experiences. For example, a 'Graduation' ceremony takes place to celebrate children's move to school, which parents are included in. Staff take children on visits to school and share progress reports and information to support children's move to school. When children move rooms within the nursery, parents are informed and their views are sought. This supports parents to become involved in their child's move and to be included in supporting them during this time. Children are well prepared by staff for the move because they spend time beforehand in their new room and the generally open-plan nature of the nursery means that they will be familiar with most staff. However, pre-school children are not well

prepared for the changes that take place between term and non term time.

Staff foster positive relationships between all children. For example, children aged two to three years are supported to think about whose turn it is when they play a lady bird game. Older children are encouraged to visit the younger children's outdoor play area, especially when their younger brothers or sisters are present. All children are encouraged to take turns with resources, which help children to play co-operatively and to consider others. All children receive and respond well to praise and encouragement from staff. All staff place a high focus on keeping children safe. They provide high levels of supervision and encourage children to become aware of how to keep themselves safe within their environment. As a result, children enjoy a safe and very harmonious environment and demonstrate an appropriate understanding of how to behave, relative to their age and understanding.

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

The owner and manager have a general understanding of the safeguarding and welfare and learning requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage. Arrangements for safeguarding children in the setting are satisfactory. Recruitment and vetting requirements are fully met. This ensures that all adults working in the setting are closely monitored and assessed for suitability, which contributes to safeguarding children. This inspection was brought forward because Ofsted received information from the Local Authority Designated Officer that records regarding the well-being of children were not kept in an accurate and timely manner. As a result, Ofsted set the nursery a notice to improve. The nursery has fully complied with this notice. A robust programme of ongoing monitoring and training is in place to ensure all staff have a secure knowledge and understanding of child protection procedures, which ensures they act appropriately to safeguard children. This includes keeping an accurate and timely record of any incidents relating to children's care. Risk assessment arrangements are in place and all necessary steps are taken to keep children fully safe and secure. All the required records to ensure the safe and efficient management of the setting and to help ensure the needs of all children are met are kept. These procedures help to ensure children are kept safe and benefit from a safe and secure environment. Although, a record of complaint is kept, it is not kept up to date to ensure parents are kept fully informed of any issues that may affect the care of their children. This is a breach of a welfare requirement and although, it does not have any significant direct impact on the safety and well-being of children, it does affect the quality of service offered to them.

The owner and manager have high expectations for children's care and learning. This ensures all staff are kind, considerate and caring to all children and mostly fully focused on supporting children's learning. The owner tailors staff to child ratios to ensure they are met and in many instances exceeded. Staff qualification requirements are also met and impressively exceeded. However, this is not always followed through with rigorous monitoring and targets for staff to continually improve their performance. Therefore, the owner and manager's visions are not always put into practice. This is particularly evident in relation to supporting children with special educational needs and/or disabilities,

children with English as an additional language and ensuring all children's next steps in learning in pre-school are fully known by staff and supported during non term times. Consequently, practice is not consistently good and some children do not always receive the level of support they require to make good progress in their learning and development.

A strong focus is given to developing positive partnerships with parents. Much effort has gone into welcoming and encouraging parents to take an active role in their child's learning and in the nursery activities. Discussions with parents demonstrate they feel very welcome and enjoy taking part in planned activities. An abundance of information is displayed around the nursery, which includes the daily food menu. However, good partnership working with parents to support children with special educational needs and/or disabilities and English as an additional language is not consistently implemented. Partnerships with other professionals are established and contribute to meeting children's. This includes working with local authority officers to provide high quality child protection training.

Self-evaluation takes into account the views of staff, children, parents and other professionals. Actions to overcome weaknesses and to continually improve the nursery provision demonstrate the owner and manager's aspirations to continually improve. For example, since the last inspection, an extension has been built to the baby room, which has included an enclosed outdoor space that links to the older children's outdoor space. This has provided more space for younger to children to play indoors and outdoors and it has provided wonderful opportunities for younger and older children to enjoy contact with each other. However, systems to monitor the delivery of the educational programmes and to ensure the full implementation of all safeguarding and welfare requirements are not fully effective. This does not ensure children are always supported to make good progress in their learning and development.

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	EY386701
Local authority	Sandwell
Inspection number	926381
Type of provision	
Registration category	Childcare - Non-Domestic
Age range of children	0 - 17
Total number of places	50
Number of children on roll	100
Name of provider	Sandwell Supply Nursery Services Ltd
Date of previous inspection	05/01/2011
Telephone number	0121 552 5242

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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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