

Sycamore House Day Nursery

36 Hadham Road, BISHOP'S STORTFORD, Hertfordshire, CM23 2QS

Inspection date

Previous inspection date

22/10/2013

Not Applicable

The quality and standards of the early years provision

This inspection:

3

Previous inspection:

Not Applicable

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 confident to make decisions about their play as they are able to make choices from the range of resources available to them.
- Staff establish warm relationships with children. Consequently, children demonstrate that they feel safe and secure.
- Parents are provided with useful information about children's daily progress and what they have enjoyed at the nursery.

It is not yet good because

- Planning is not fully developed to consistently reflect the individual needs of all children attending the nursery.
- At times, staff do not always enhance children's learning through making maximum use of open-ended questions.
- Opportunities outdoors to develop in all areas of learning are not fully explored, particularly for older 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.

Inspection activities

- The inspector observed activities in each of the playrooms.
- The inspector looked at a selection of policies, procedures and photographs of children joining in with different activities.
- The inspector carried out a joint observation with the manager.
- The inspector spoke with the manager, staff and parents at appropriate times throughout the inspection.

Inspector

Clair Stockings

Full Report

Information about the setting

Sycamore House Day Nursery registered in 2013 and is on the Early Years Register. The nursery serves the local area and is accessible to all children. It operates from a large converted house in Bishop Stortford, Hertfordshire. There is an enclosed area available for outdoor play. The nursery opens Monday to Friday for 51 weeks of the year. Sessions are from 7.30am until 6pm. Children attend for a variety of sessions. The nursery provides funded early education for three- and four-year-old children and there are 37 children on roll. The nursery employs 15 members of childcare staff. Of these, one holds an appropriate early years qualification at level 2 and nine hold qualifications at level 3 and above, including one with Early Years Professional Status.

What the setting needs to do to improve further

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

- develop the planning to make sure that it accurately reflects the assessment of individual children's skills, interests and progress.

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

- support staff to enhance children's learning through consistently good use of open-ended questions
- enhance the outdoor area to provide a wider and more challenging range of experiences, particularly for the older children.

Inspection judgements

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

Children are eager to attend the nursery and motivated to learn. They have access to a variety of age-appropriate toys and resources to encourage them to make sound progress in their learning and development. They explore and play, displaying emerging levels of independence and self-confidence, choosing from the range of resources offered. Staff have a developing understanding of the learning and development requirements. They observe the individual children's progress and record their development in their profile folders. However, they currently do not always use these effectively to plan and provide relevant experiences to consistently meet the individual learning and development needs of all children.

The key person system supports effective links with parents and carers. Staff obtain information about the children's interests when they start and provide resources to aid the settling-in and initial assessment process. Staff communicate with parents on a daily basis and parents have regular opportunities to view their child's profile folder. This approach successfully engages parents in their children's education.

Children clearly enjoy learning through play, eagerly choosing what they wish to do from the interesting range of resources offered. They demonstrate a positive approach to learning, supported by the cheerful interactions of the staff team caring for them. Attentive staff play alongside the children offering gentle support and encouragement. Skilful questions by some staff extend children's thinking and they gently guide children to develop their skills as they play alongside them. However, on occasions, less experienced staff do not always use spontaneous opportunities to pose open-ended questions to extend children's thinking and development in all areas of learning.

The indoor environment is organised to allow children free access to a developmentally appropriate range of toys and resources covering all areas of learning. Staff place a range of interesting toys around babies to encourage them to explore the space around them. Babies are curious about the toys that have buttons and make a noise. They smile as the toys light up and produce sounds as they touch buttons. This helps them develop an understanding of how things work. Older children gain an understanding of technology as, supported by staff, they use the computer to explore literacy and mathematical programs.

Staff promote the communication and language skills of all children. For example, the children eagerly join staff in singing familiar action songs and rhymes. Staff join in with children's play, talking to them clearly and taking opportunities to extend their vocabularies. For example, while playing 'doctors', children explain 'the bandage will make your arm better'. Staff support children's development in early literacy as children are eager to share books with them. They enjoy snuggling up together to share a favourite book, establishing children's interest in reading for pleasure and purpose. Accessible writing materials are available for all children to practise their early writing skills.

There is a suitable mix of adult-led and child-initiated play experiences, which encourages children to be active learners as they move freely between activities of their choice. Consequently, they develop skills to support the next stage in their learning and their move to school.

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

Staff support children's emerging understanding of the importance of a healthy lifestyle that involves physical exercise and a healthy diet. Children benefit from regular fresh air and exercise during outdoor play. They play outside on a daily basis and the outdoor area promotes children's developing physical skills and confidence. Children choose from a range of physical play equipment, including wheeled toys, crates and balls. However, the range of resources outdoors does not consistently provide good levels of challenging

experiences, particularly for the older children. The nursery chef prepares nutritious snacks and meals, and children's individual dietary requirements are met. Mealtimes are sociable occasions when staff encourage older children to learn independence skills by helping to serve the food and pour their own drinks. Older children are learning about the need for good hygiene practices as they routinely wash hands before touching food and after visiting the toilet. As a result, these children achieve some independence in hygiene and managing their personal care.

The nursery has established a positive key person system, which supports children to feel secure and have a sense of belonging. New starters settle quickly into the nursery as staff take account of information about individual children's care needs obtained from parents. Effective settling in routines help children create strong bonds with staff. As a result, all children form secure emotional attachments to staff. These good relationships also help to prepare children for future transfers, for example, from one base room to another within the nursery and, later to school.

Children play cooperatively with their friends, taking turns and sharing resources. Staff take a consistent approach in their expectations for children's behaviour, so children quickly learn what is acceptable. Regular praise and encouragement offered by staff promotes children's self-esteem. Children willingly take on responsibility, for example, helping to prepare the table for lunch. During play outdoors, they listen carefully and adhere closely to the instructions of staff and regularly practise the emergency evacuation procedures. This demonstrates a mature attitude to taking responsibility for the safety of both themselves and their friends. Complying with these expectations means children enjoy their nursery experiences and have some emerging skills to underpin their eventual move to school.

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

Children's welfare is promoted because safeguarding regulations and duties are appropriately met. Staff have a suitable knowledge and understanding of safeguarding policies and procedures and are aware of their responsibilities in this respect. They know how to report and record concerns and have attended relevant training. Vetting and recruitment procedures check that all adults working with children are suitable to do so. Suitable induction procedures are in place to support new staff and students and to help them understand their roles and responsibilities. The nursery adheres to regulatory ratios to meet the needs of all children and ensure their safety. Children are protected in the event of an accident because a number of staff have a current paediatric first aid certificate. Children play in a secure, safe environment where staff complete daily safety checks and regularly review risk assessments to promote their welfare.

The manager and her team demonstrate an appropriate knowledge of the Early Years Foundation Stage. They understand their responsibility to promote the learning and development of all children. The manager monitors staff performance informally through observations and is beginning to identify priorities to improve practice. Staff are supported

to attend some relevant courses and gain additional qualifications. The manager uses regular staff meetings to discuss and share any ideas and practice issues to further promote effective outcomes for children. The manager demonstrates a commitment to the continual development of the whole provision and is beginning to identify realistic future targets for further improvement. Evaluation takes account of the views of the manager, staff, the local authority advisor, parents and children.

Effective procedures have been established to work with parents and, as a result, parents speak positively of the care and learning their children receive. Parents are happy with the information provided about their child and provide regular feedback to staff, both verbal and written. Parent consultations also take place during the year to formally share information about their child's progress in nursery and at home. Effective relationships with other professionals and external agencies are established so that children's needs are supported and help them to make progress. Links with other providers are in place and continue to be developed, to further aid children's progress and development and ease children's move to other settings or onto school.

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	EY460413
Local authority	Hertfordshire
Inspection number	919180
Type of provision	Full-time provision
Registration category	Childcare - Non-Domestic
Age range of children	0 - 5
Total number of places	74
Number of children on roll	37
Name of provider	Sycamore House Day Nursery Ltd
Date of previous inspection	not applicable
Telephone number	01279 465097

Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the guidance '*Complaints procedure: raising concerns and making complaints about Ofsted*', which is available from Ofsted's website: www.ofsted.gov.uk. If you would like Ofsted to send you a copy of the guidance, please telephone 0300 123 4234, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.

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.

The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) regulates and inspects to achieve excellence in the care of children and young people, and in education and skills for learners of all ages. It regulates and inspects childcare and children's social care, and inspects the Children and Family Court Advisory Support Service (Cafcass), schools, colleges, initial teacher training, work-based learning and skills training, adult and community learning, and education and training in prisons and other secure establishments. It assesses council children's services, and inspects services for looked after children, safeguarding and child protection.

If you would like a copy of this document in a different format, such as large print or Braille, please telephone 0300 123 4234, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.

You may copy all or parts of this document for non-commercial educational purposes, as long as you give details of the source and date of publication and do not alter the information in any way.

To receive regular email alerts about new publications, including survey reports and school inspection reports, please visit our website and go to 'Subscribe'.

Piccadilly Gate
Store St
Manchester
M1 2WD

T: 0300 123 4234
Textphone: 0161 618 8524
E: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
W: www.ofsted.gov.uk

© Crown copyright 2012

