

Sunhill Montessori Nursery

Sunhill Montessori Nursery, Grantham Close, ROYSTON, SG8 5WY

Inspection date

Previous inspection date

04/12/2013

Not Applicable

The quality and standards of the early years provision

This inspection:

2

Previous inspection:

Not Applicable

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

2

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

2

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

2

The quality and standards of the early years provision

This provision is good

- Practitioners plan effectively, tailoring activities to individual children's needs. This means children are active learners and the use of appropriate teaching methods help children make good progress.
- The clear link between observation, assessment and planning which is underpinned by practitioner knowledge, ensures the educational programme supports children's learning in the prime and specific areas of learning.
- The key person arrangements are successful in engaging all parents to help practitioners meet children care needs and support home learning effectively.
- The detailed monitoring of the nursery through audits and reflection on practice ensures good quality care for all children. Safeguarding is prioritised and effective forward planning secures improvements.

It is not yet outstanding because

- The outdoor areas do not provide children with sufficient opportunities to explore natural materials and habitats, to further enhance their understanding of the world.
- The move between rooms within the nursery is not always successfully managed to provide children with sufficient continuity during the period of transition.

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 each of the operational group rooms and garden and conducted a joint observation with the manager.
- The inspector, practitioners, managers and children had wide ranging discussions at appropriate times during the inspection.
- The inspector looked at documentation related to the management of the setting, children's progress and self-evaluation.
- The inspector took account of the views of parents through short discussions.
- The inspector checked evidence of suitability and qualifications of practitioners working with children.

Inspector

Alison Reeves

Full report

Information about the setting

Sunhill Montessori Nursery registered in 2013, when it moved to new premises. The nursery is one of a group of 10 settings owned by Little Hands Limited, which is a subsidiary of Sunhill Daycare (Europe) Limited. The nursery is registered on the Early Years Register and the compulsory and voluntary parts of the Childcare Register. The setting operates from purpose-built premises, close to residential areas in Royston, Hertfordshire.

The nursery serves the local area and is accessible to all children. The nursery employs 11 practitioners, nine of whom hold appropriate early years qualifications at levels 4, 3 and 2. The manager is working towards a qualification at level 5 and two practitioners are working towards a qualification at level 3. The nursery opens Monday to Friday, for 51 weeks of the year, from 7.30am until 6.30pm. There are currently a total of 63 children on roll, all of whom are in the early years age range and attend for a variety of sessions. It supports a small number of children who speak English as an additional language.

What the setting needs to do to improve further

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

- review the provision in the outdoor areas to provide children with greater opportunities for exploring natural resources, planting and growing and habitats for mini-beasts
- review the organisation of transitions between rooms to better support children in adjusting to changes, particularly where staffing issues necessitate combining groups.

Inspection judgements

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

Children are making good progress in their learning because practitioners use appropriate teaching methods tailored to children's individual needs. Practitioners have secure knowledge of the learning and development requirements of the Statutory framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage and this means they plan and deliver a range of activities that help children to learn through play. The youngest children enjoy open-ended activities, which allow them to explore and develop their ideas. For example, the painting activity offers children the opportunity to use brushes, scrapers or their hands, to make their designs. Practitioners recognise that children may wish to return to the activity later in the day to add to their picture or to make a new one, so the activity is freely available

for an extended period. As a result, children become deeply involved in their chosen task and are supported effectively by practitioners. A detailed understanding that activities involve different elements from the various areas of learning means practitioners teach according to individual children's next steps in their learning. They bring in different emphasis to activities according to individual needs. When a group of the older children are enjoying a role-play game involving an injured person and the medical team, practitioners ensure children experience writing for purpose by providing paper and pencils for writing prescriptions. Practitioner asks about the medicine that is needed and this encourages children's to attempt writing for themselves. In the same game, children show their understanding of the different roles of people who help us as they play doctors, nurses and police officers. Children's language is enriched as practitioners talk to the children. This provides them with a vocabulary to describe and explain their play and also through questioning, helps children to develop their ideas and further enhance their experience. Practitioners are making increasingly good use of the outdoor areas. They provide suitable resources to support children's learning. However, the lack of natural resources and growing environments does not provide children with the very best opportunities to explore fully this aspect of the curriculum.

Children who speak English as an additional language are supported effectively. Practitioners use dual language books and some signage to help children. This shows the value placed on children's home language while continuing to promote their spoken English. Some practitioners use their knowledge of other languages to communicate with children and this helps considerably in making children feel confident and developing their 'have a go' attitude. Practitioners assess children's progress well. They frequently observe children as they play and use the information gathered to identify their next steps in learning. Each next step for every child is entered on to the planning sheets. This means every child is included, their needs are known and practitioners are planning to support all children in making good progress across each of the seven areas of learning. This means children are gaining a wide range of skills and knowledge that will help them in the next stage of their learning.

Parents are well informed about their child's progress. From the outset, parents provide detailed answers to questions about their child's stage of development, including important factors, such as weight. Consequently, practitioners have a clear understanding of every child's particular starting points on which they can build. Ongoing sharing of progress information and seeking further details from home and other settings the child attends, provides continuity in learning, where achievements are shared and celebrated.

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

Successful key person arrangements mean children settle well and make strong bonds with a small number of practitioners. Arrangements for new children joining the nursery are carefully planned according to family's specific needs rather than a predetermined pattern. Parents say they find this helpful and supportive and it makes it easier to leave their children in the care of the practitioners. This supports children's emotional well-being and helps them to feel comfortable and secure. The move on to other settings, including school is equally well managed. This means children understand what school might be like

and have the confidence and independence skills to support them. The arrangements for the move between group rooms are less effective, particularly at times when the rooms are likely to merge due to low numbers. For example, during the winter months when there is increased level of illness there can be disruption to the planned arrangements. As a result, children do not benefit from the consistent implementation of the carefully planned process, which they find unsettling.

Children behave well in the nursery. Practitioners are consistently good role models supporting children in sharing, turn taking and being responsible for small tasks. After eating, children thoroughly delight in washing their plates at the low-level sink, before they go to the kitchen for a proper clean. This helps children to develop a responsible attitude and they learn about hygiene issues in addition to the more usual hand washing routines. Daily use of the outdoor areas for learning and energetic play helps children to develop and maintain strong and healthy bodies. The nutritionally balanced and varied menu further supports children in developing healthy habits as part of a healthy lifestyle.

Children and their families are enjoying using the newly built premises. The thoughtful organisation of the layout of the nursery means resources and equipment are easily accessible. Children help themselves to what they need from the storage units. This means they can use the equipment which best suits their needs and take charge of some aspects of their lives. This builds their confidence, helps them to work cooperatively with others and gives them independence. Children move safely indoors and handle resources with care. Practitioners, particularly with the youngest children, provide practical support with tasks, such as pouring water from the jug. This helps children to develop the confidence and skill to manage tasks alone in the future. Children learn from an early age about understanding and managing risks. For example, they are involved in risk assessing the environment, using picture representation to identify possible hazards and what action they should take.

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

Practitioners in the nursery have a good and very clear understanding of the requirements for the Statutory framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage. Consequently, they meet all of their legal obligations and provide a good service for children and their families. Practitioners ensure children are safeguarded because they check the environment and take steps to minimise potential hazards. All practitioners attend safeguarding training on a regular basis. This means they recognise the possible signs that children are at risk from harm and know how to make a referral following the nursery policy, which is in line with government procedures. Recruitment is robust. All of the required checks are undertaken to ensure that practitioners are suitable to work with children. A rigorous interview, induction and probationary period help to establish suitability and develop practitioner knowledge and skills.

Most of the practitioners have an early years qualification and several are studying to gain qualifications at a higher level. Ongoing training in-house and with external organisations, helps to keep practitioners up-to-date with current thinking on teaching and learning. The

nursery uses a number of strategies to monitor practice and the progress of children. A system of audits look at the environment, resources and practice to help practitioners reflect how best to meet children's needs. Practice guidance sheets written specifically on individual subjects, support practitioners in providing more effectively for children. A corresponding fact sheet for parents ensure they too, are well informed about issues, such as children biting. Practitioners work with the local authority and the company's quality and development managers to monitor practice in the nursery. They use the visits to add to and develop action plans for improvements. A system for observing practice, team meetings and individual supervision is being embedded. Initial evaluation shows it is having a positive impact in supporting all practitioners to reflect, identify aspects of the provision to be improved and to develop strategies to secure improvements for children.

Partnerships with parents are successful. The nursery provides a wealth of opportunities for two-way communication. The use of electronic messaging, displayed materials, communication books and time to talk to practitioners each day is highly effective. As a result, parents are well informed about the nursery and their children's ongoing progress. Parents say practitioners are professional, polite and friendly. They also comment that their children enjoy being at the nursery, making friends and developing their communication and social skills. Practitioners have established relationships with other settings that children attend. This helps to provide continuity for children and ensures each setting understands what children know and can do. The nursery has strong links with the local children's centre and other local authority services. This enables them to access additional support and advice and to direct families to the appropriate services when needed.

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	Requires improvement	The provision is not giving children a good standard of early years education and/or there are minor breaches of the safeguarding and welfare requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage. It will be monitored and inspected within twelve months of the date of this inspection.
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 monitored and inspected again within six 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	EY463845
Local authority	Hertfordshire
Inspection number	922562
Type of provision	Full-time provision
Registration category	Childcare - Non-Domestic
Age range of children	0 - 17
Total number of places	78
Number of children on roll	63
Name of provider	Sunhill Daycare (Europe) Limited
Date of previous inspection	not applicable
Telephone number	01763 226 030

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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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