

Cowdown Day Nursery

Cowdown Farm House, Cowdown Lane, Andover, Hampshire, SP11 6LE

Inspection date

04/04/2014

Previous inspection date

28/10/2009

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 requires improvement

- Staff promote children's mathematical learning well during spontaneous and routine activities, as well as in adult -led activities.
- Children behave well and show concern for their friends because staff are good role models to them, treating one another and the children with respect.
- Partnerships with parents are positive overall and this means parents are involved in their children's learning and kept informed of their progress.
- Staff identify and plan what children need to learn next appropriately and seek additional support when needed, so all children make suitable progress in relation to their starting points on entry.

It is not yet good because

- Daily routines do not always take sufficient account of children's individual needs, for example during sleep and rest times.
- Staff do not check that all outdoor equipment is suitable for children's use. They do not provide exciting learning opportunities outside in all seven areas of learning and children under two years of age use the outdoor area for restricted periods only.
- The baby room does not have sufficient facilities in order to promote children's physical and sensory development.
- The programme for expressive arts and designs is at times too adult led, so children

are not able to express themselves freely using materials of their choice.

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 children and staff engaged in activities both indoors and outside.
- The inspector spoke to management, staff, some parents and children.
- The inspector sampled relevant documentation.

Inspector

Sharon Palmer

Full report

Information about the setting

Cowdown Day Nursery opened in 1996 and registered with Ofsted in 2001. It operates from within the grounds of the provider's home in a converted farm house on the outskirts of Andover, Hampshire. All children have access to an enclosed garden. The nursery serves a wide geographical area and is registered on the Early Years Register. The nursery receives funding for the provision of free early education for children aged three and four years. There are currently 34 children on roll. The nursery currently provides care for children who have special educational needs and/or disabilities. The nursery operates from 8am to 6pm five days a week for 50 weeks of the year. A total of 11 staff are employed to work with the children, of whom seven hold appropriate early years qualifications.

What the setting needs to do to improve further

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

- improve self-evaluation and monitoring procedures, so that these identify areas of weakness more effectively, including checking daily that outdoor equipment is suitable for children's use and removed if unsafe
- ensure that routines, especially with regards to sleep and rest times, respond to children's changing individual physical needs and ensure that the youngest children are provided with an environment that help them in learning to walk
- improve all children's outdoor experiences so these cover all seven areas of learning in the garden, and ensure that children under two years old have more frequent access to this outdoor area.

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

- provide better opportunities for children to express themselves freely through exploring and using a wide range of resources, media and materials as they wish without too much adult direction or pre-determined results.

Inspection judgements

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

Overall, staff help children make sound progress in their learning and development. Staff regularly observe children and know the progress they are making. They identify what

children need to learn next and incorporate this well into planning. Children generally experience a range of activities that support their all-round development, particularly indoors. However, staff do not always identify what they can do to hasten children's learning. As a result, they have not identified that there is a somewhat limited range of resources in the outdoor area and that not all areas of learning are covered here. For example, there are few resources to promote children's early writing in the programme for their literacy development or natural materials to encourage the children to learn about the world around them.

Staff know the children for whom they take special responsibility well and can talk about how they are supporting them. Staff encourage toddlers' speech by talking to them about what they are doing. They provide them with the vocabulary they need to express themselves when ready. For example, a toddler points to a plant and says 'watering can', so showing that new words are learnt as a result of the experiences provided by staff. Staff engage older children in conversations, and encourage speech and sounds development with younger children. Staff aid children's communication and language skills by having daily language groups. These support the development of children's listening skills and ability to pay attention. Such times help staff identify whether there are any children with language delay so they received additional support. This helps children's language development to improve.

Staff regularly update children's records. Generally, these provide all staff and parents with clear information about individual children's progression. Staff complete the required progress checks for two-year-old children and share these with parents, so all concerned with individual children know their capabilities. The Special Educational Needs Coordinator seeks support from other professionals, in liaison with parents, so that children receive the support they need to help prepare them for the next stage in their learning.

Children show they are happy and enjoy their time at nursery. Staff provide older children with plenty of opportunities to learn through exploration. They explore sand and water indoors, for example, a variety of craft materials including painting as they wish when using an easel. However, staff sometimes over-direct the younger children's work with a pre-determined end product in mind so that they cannot explore materials and use them as they wish. Therefore, children are losing opportunities to develop their creativity freely and learn independently.

Staff promote children's early mathematical learning well. During the inspection, for example, staff helped children to sort and match coloured toy bears, and then encouraged children to count how many they had. Children used simple addition and subtraction well owing to sensitive teaching that supported each child involved in the activity. Other children were seen to use early mathematics as they played independently, such as with pegs. They were able to discuss what might happen if too many pegs were placed on top of one another and could decide how many more pegs would make them the same height. Staff were ready to guide their learning when needed.

Staff support children's physical development suitably overall. They teach children to manage appropriate risks in the garden, such as when they attempt to walk on milk crates unaided. Staff are on hand to offer help to any less confident children. Babies develop

their hand skills when holding and shaking coloured bottles to watch the glitter move inside, although overall, staff provide them with fewer chances to explore a wide range of natural materials.

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

Generally, indoor and outdoor play areas are secure and welcoming. Security is stringent; for example, all doors have key codes which are only accessible by staff which keeps the premises secure. Despite the robust security measures, some risks are not always identified straight away in order to make sure children play with safe equipment. For example, in the outside area children were seen to use some outdoor bikes which were unfit for their use. This oversight puts children at risk of injury.

Nevertheless, overall, there are appropriate resources for all children of all ages. Many are stored on low-shelving units which encourage children to be independent, make choices and help themselves. However, in the baby room, the environment staff provide does not support children's learning and development well. For example, staff do not make the best use of resources to create a challenging environment that fully supports the youngest children's physical development to help them move from sitting to standing.

Staff encourage children to be independent in their personal needs, such as by feeding themselves at lunchtime. They encourage children to pour their drinks too whenever they want them. Children show they understand routines. They enjoy helping themselves to a healthy snack and placing their names down on the table once they have washed their hands. This system helps to promote their feelings of security, independence and early reading skills.

Overall, staff maintain children's good health and teach them how to live healthy life styles. The staff provide freshly-cooked foods which are cooked on the premises. Parents receive a monthly menu so that they are fully aware of what their children are eating and know that children's dietary needs are met. Babies are given food that is pureed on the premises, and which is appropriate for their stages of development. Staff further promote most children's good health by providing them with plenty of time outdoors. However, staff give children aged under two years less time outside to enjoy fresh air and to have a change of scene often through the day. As well as this, children who prefer to be outside have less opportunity to choose to do so.

Overall, staff develop positive and caring relationships with the children. Children were seen to arrive confidently and to settle quickly. Staff recognise that changes to children's routines can be unsettling so they aim to introduce changes slowly so they can get used to them. For example, when children move to the next room the children spend some regular time in that space with their key person. Consequently, staff actions support children's emotional well-being.

Each child is allocated a particular staff member who regularly liaises with parents. Generally, this system helps staff respond to children's individual needs. However, not all

staff think about how the daily routines affect children. For example, all children are expected to lie down for a sleep at the same time of day but some children do not require either a sleep or a rest. This means chances for some children to learn are lost. Consequently, children's care is not fully tailored to meet their individual needs at these times.

Staff are good role models and use effective methods to help children understand what is expected of them and how to behave. They praise and encourage children frequently. This approach boosts children's confidence and self-esteem and they behave well.

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

Overall, children's progress in learning and development is adequate and all the related requirements are implemented. However, the management does not monitor children's experiences in the baby room and outside area sufficiently well. In both these areas some weaknesses have been overlooked; consequently, not all children's progress is as good as it should be.

Staff have established positive relationships with parents. Parents spoken to during the inspection stated that they are happy with the care and learning their children receive. They are satisfied with the information they receive and the opportunity to speak with staff and their child's key person. Staff caring for babies and younger children provide parents with daily written information regarding individual daily routines, such as feeding, sleeping and toileting. These arrangements continue for older children in different ways so parents are advised of the different activities that children have been involved in throughout the day. Parents can spend time in the nursery and join in with activities their children are involved in too. This approach means parents are able to support their children's learning at home because they know what children are learning.

The management implements suitable systems to deal with any mishaps that occur during the children's time at nursery. Staff respond to children's accidents and incidents appropriately. Management monitor accidents in order to check that risks are dealt with effectively. However, daily checks of equipment in the outdoor area do not identify all potential risks to children's safety, although no child has come to harm. Emergency procedures of what to do in the event of a fire are explained to visitors and all staff are aware of what to do in emergency situations.

Overall, management and staff have a good knowledge and understanding of the safeguarding and welfare requirements. They understand child protection issues and the procedures to follow if they have concerns about a child in their care. Safeguarding is reviewed at staff meetings and staff have completed necessary training. Management follows appropriate procedures when recruiting and employing staff so that children are cared for by appropriate people. They complete checks to help ensure staff are suitable to work with children. Once employed, staff complete a thorough induction to help them understand their individual roles and responsibilities. This process is supported with

ongoing supervision, appraisal and training as part of their continuing professional development. In addition, there are some self-evaluation processes in place to help management evaluate the quality of their practice. They seek the views of parents and staff generally respond to feedback from the local authority. However, self-evaluation is not sufficiently robust to recognise all areas for improvement and this weakness has a negative impact on the learning environment provided for children.

Management and staff liaise appropriately with other professionals. Prior to children attending school, staff invite teachers to attend the setting and discuss children's development in order to aid a smooth transfer. The manager has sought progress information from the school in order to reflect on the care and education that he is providing for children. When other professionals are involved, such as speech therapists, staff work with them to provide a joint approach with all working to the same aims.

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	507866
Local authority	Hampshire
Inspection number	836908
Type of provision	Full-time provision
Registration category	Childcare - Non-Domestic
Age range of children	0 - 5
Total number of places	40
Number of children on roll	34
Name of provider	Cowdown Nursery Ltd
Date of previous inspection	28/10/2009
Telephone number	01264 363098

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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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Piccadilly Gate
Store St
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