

Seymour House Day Nursery School

68 Brinkley Lane, Colchester, CO4 9XN

Inspection date	14/07/2014
Previous inspection date	Not Applicable

The quality and standards of the early years provision	This inspection:	1
	Previous inspection:	Not Applicable
How well the early years provision meets the needs of the range of children who attend		1
The contribution of the early years provision to the well-being of children		1
The effectiveness of the leadership and management of the early years provision		1

The quality and standards of the early years provision

This provision is outstanding

- Children are robustly protected from harm as practitioners demonstrate thorough knowledge and understanding of their responsibilities, with regards to protecting children. All practitioners update their safeguarding knowledge through appropriate and regular training.
- The quality of teaching is exemplary. Practitioners are dynamic and demonstrate a superb knowledge of how children learn. Practitioners provide a stimulating range of learning opportunities, which give children the freedom to develop their own interests and learning styles, so that they make excellent progress in their learning.
- Children are extremely settled, content and happy in the nursery environment. Exemplary settling-in procedures and arrangements for transition, ensure that every child begins their nursery life in a positive way. Key persons develop extensive knowledge of children in their groups and use this information to tailor every aspect of their care and learning to meet their individual requirements.
- Parents and others are superbly encouraged to be involved in their children's nursery life through robust partnership working. This ensures that parents are provided with a clear and accurate account of their children's day and are involved in their ongoing development.
- Management is inspirational. Innovative ideas are successfully implemented throughout the nursery as the management team are highly skilled at motivating practitioners to maintain exceptionally high standards.

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 all of the nursery rooms and the garden and viewed all areas of the nursery for safety.

The inspector held discussions with the manager, the Special Educational Needs

- Coordinator, the Equality Needs Coordinator, the designated persons for safeguarding children, the food and nutrition officer, practitioners and children at appropriate times throughout the inspection.

- The inspector held a joint observation and discussion with the manager.

- The inspector looked at documentation to evidence the suitability and qualifications of all adults working in the nursery.

The inspector viewed a range of records, including children's details, information about children's learning and development, planning and assessment records,

- accident and medication information, the daily attendance register, written policies, written risk assessments, information on monitoring and a range of other relevant documentation.

- The inspector took account of the views of parents spoken to during the inspection.

Inspector

Lynn Hughes

Full report

Information about the setting

Seymour House Day Nursery School was established in 2001 and was re-registered in 2014 on the Early Years Register as a limited company. It is one of eight nurseries in the group. It operates from a purpose built premises in Colchester, Essex. The nursery employs 14 members of staff, of whom 13 hold appropriate early years qualifications at level 3 and above. The nursery opens five days a week, all year round with the exception of bank holidays and one week at Christmas. The nursery operates from 7am until 6pm. There are currently 105 children on roll. Children attend for a variety of sessions. The nursery provides funded early education for three- and four-year-old children. It supports a number of children who speak English as an additional language and children with special educational needs and/or disabilities.

What the setting needs to do to improve further

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

- enhance the already superb procedures for involving parents in their children's learning, by providing a space for children to display their creativity, for example, models made from construction resources.

Inspection judgements

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

Children's nursery days are exciting, purposeful and fun. Practitioners demonstrate exceptional knowledge of how children learn and plan extremely stimulating and exciting activities for them, which cover all areas of learning. Children excel in their learning as practitioners fine tune planning to ensure that every child's learning styles and capabilities are accounted for in the planned activities. In addition to adult-led activities, children also have superb opportunities to guide their own learning by freely accessing the exciting and extremely high-quality resources on offer to them. Children are actively encouraged by practitioners to adapt, transport and devise new ways of using the equipment. Key persons use their observations proficiently to build on children's progress by identifying their next steps in learning. Each key person then plans weekly activities that they know will help children in their individual key groups to move forward and progress. Planning is, however, flexible and key persons often put aside their planning to allow children's interests and excitement to lead the way. Key persons use the nursery's highly effective systems for assessing children's development to see at a glance where there are gaps in children's learning, as well as being able to identify those children who are making exceptional progress. Key persons use their knowledge to ensure timely interventions are put in place to support children, to ensure that they succeed to the best of their ability. Development records show that children across the nursery are making excellent progress

in their learning, including those who speak English as an additional language and those who have special educational needs and/or disabilities. Parents are encouraged to play an extremely active role in their children's learning, by viewing their learning records, discussing next steps with their key persons and continuing learning at home.

Children communicate extremely well; they converse proficiently and share their thoughts and ideas with other children and with adults. Practitioners effectively support children's communication skills by using clear and appropriate language, skilful questioning and by providing opportunities for children to solve problems for themselves. Children's literacy skills are expertly promoted throughout the nursery through welcoming and exciting book corners. Practitioners display extensive print in the environment and provide excellent opportunities for children to make marks and to practice emergent writing. Children who are creative and imaginative are provided with superb opportunities to express themselves. For example, the well-equipped creative areas enable children to choose when and what to paint and which collage and sticking materials to use. Exciting role-play resources indoors and outdoors enable children to delve into an imaginative world, whereby they can become different characters or simply act out scenarios from real life. The well-resourced mud kitchen created at one end of the garden provides superb opportunities for large and small groups of children to make delicious looking soup for their friends.

Babies enjoy exploring a wide range of learning experiences indoors and outdoors. Practitioners understand the need to respond affectionately to babbles and sounds, to encourage babies to develop communication skills. Non-verbal communication is promoted throughout the nursery to enhance children's communication. Young babies, therefore, learn to use signs alongside their emergent speech to help them to communicate their needs. Babies make good use of the furniture and equipment to help them develop mobility skills and to practice moving around the safe and secure environment. Older children are expertly encouraged to develop skills which enable them to move on to their next stages of learning. For example, the adult-led circle time encourages children's listening skills and provides a forum for them to develop confidence when speaking in groups. Many children write recognisable letters and are beginning to write their own names. Some children excel in pre-reading skills and are already proficiently reading simple books from a recognised reading scheme. Children who speak English as an additional language are provided with superb opportunities to use their home language in play, to help to develop language and communication at home. Practitioners provide children with dual language books to look at. The Equality Needs Coordinator arranges for key words to be translated into children's home languages, to assist key persons to settle children and help them to feel comfortable. Extensive posters and resources enable children to learn about the wider community and to celebrate other people's similarities and differences. Children are expertly prepared for school as practitioners work closely with local primary schools in the area to aide a smooth transition. Children are provided with superb opportunities to share their achievements with their parents. However, there is scope to further enhance the already excellent provision, by providing a display area for children to present models, for example, those made from construction materials, to show to their parents and visitors.

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

Children settle well in the nursery environment, effectively supported by their key person. Parents, children and key persons are involved in the nursery's well-considered settling-in procedures, ensuring that children's early experiences of nursery life are pleasant, relaxed and enjoyable. Children form very close and caring relationships with their key person and with their peers. They know all of the adults in the nursery well as much of the day is spent in the communal garden, where they have opportunities to meet other practitioners and children. Managers know every child by name and are greeted by excited children, wanting to tell them all about their day as they tour the nursery rooms. Key persons are highly skilled in helping children to feel secure and safe and use their expertise to effectively promote children's emotional well-being.

Children behave well and show kindness and respect to each other. Practitioners enhance children's understanding of the nursery rules, through gentle discussions and through group circle times and activities. Practitioners act as excellent role models, speaking to each other in a kind and gentle way and creating an environment of trust. Practitioner's superb presentation of the environment enables children to fully guide and lead their own learning. Every aspect of the provision is child-led with superb use of learning resources both indoors and outdoors. Children's independence skills are expertly promoted by practitioners making every element of their day accessible. Children are actively encouraged to make choices and decisions for themselves and to have a voice in how the nursery room operates.

Children thoroughly enjoy a wide range of meals and snacks during their nursery day, from breakfast to afternoon tea. All snacks and teas are freshly prepared from good quality ingredients by the nursery cook. Children's special dietary needs and allergies are proficiently met, by the cook and manager working together with parents to establish clear knowledge of each child's needs. Children are provided with superb opportunities to develop independence skills during routine activities, such as mealtimes. They help to set their place at the table, serve their own meals and drinks and clear their plates on completion. Practitioners use snack and mealtimes effectively to create a quiet ambience whereby gentle conversation can take place and children learn the value of good table manners. Children develop a secure understanding of how to keep themselves safe and healthy through the practitioners' careful guidance. For example, they understand how and when to wash their hands to prevent germs from spreading. Children flourish as they have constant daily access to fresh air and exercise in the nursery's extremely well-equipped and exciting garden. Children learn the importance of exercise and keeping fit through planned physical exercise sessions, in addition to regular outside activities where they learn to negotiate the hills and mounds in the garden. Children's transitions in life are superbly supported by knowledgeable key persons, who help to guide them through these changes. For example, when children move from one nursery room to another, their key person visits the new room with them and helps them to become familiar with the new adults, children and surroundings.

The effectiveness of the leadership and management of the early years

provision

Children are extremely well-protected from harm as practitioners and management demonstrate a wealth of knowledge about how to safeguard children. All practitioners and managers are skilfully trained to ensure that their safeguarding knowledge remains robust. Regular training events and in-house workshops held through the company's management team provide excellent opportunities for practitioners to update their safeguarding understanding. The designated persons for safeguarding children have completed all relevant training to enable them to fulfil their roles and to support the team through any referrals and monitoring of children's safety. Managers and practitioners ensure that the nursery's effective security procedures are rigorously followed. For example, all parents, children and visitors to the nursery are greeted at the door, to ensure that they are known to the setting, before being allowed to enter the building. Managers follow the nursery's robust recruitment procedures when employing new practitioners to ensure that all adults working with children are suitable to do so. The checks used to evidence all practitioners' suitability and proof of their qualifications and training are available on file for inspection. Managers and practitioners maintain an exceptionally safe, clean and well-organised environment, through their effective risk assessment and safety checking procedures. Individual children and practitioners with additional needs, such as food allergies or pregnant women, are effectively risk assessed to ensure that the practices and the environment also meet their individual needs.

The management team and practitioners are inspirational. This nursery is one of eight in a small chain of day nurseries across Essex. An extremely well-considered management structure ensures that every level of management and all practitioners are superbly supported. For example, the providers and their son oversee the operational management of all eight settings. Area coordinators travel to the various nurseries on a weekly basis to support the managers and to oversee all aspects of quality assurance. In each of the nurseries there are two managers, which the company call 'dual management'. One manager holds overall responsibility for the day-to-day management of the provision, such as, staffing, selling nursery places, budgets and liaising with the head office, while the other manager focuses on the provision for early years. This ensures that the Early Years Foundation Stage is proficiently followed, especially with regards to the learning and development aspects. Managers and practitioners work well together as a strong and capable team of highly skilled early educators. Managers implement extremely rigorous monitoring systems to ensure that they review and evaluate every aspect of the nursery on a regular basis. This provides the managers with an extremely sharp focus on nursery life and enables them to effectively monitor every child's progress, to ensure that all children achieve to the best of their ability. Managers review planning and assessment systems, to ensure that children's individual learning needs and styles are being effectively planned for and that any gaps in children's learning are quickly identified. Managers skilfully seek support for those children requiring additional help and work closely with parents to ensure this process is handled sensitively, but proficiently. Managers and practitioners know their nursery well. They expertly use reflective practice to review and evaluate all aspects of the provision and involve parents, children and others in the self-evaluation process. Clear and meaningful targets for improvement are devised from the reflective practice systems, which the team proficiently address to ensure that the nursery

is constantly improving and developing. Managers keep a sharp focus on their workforce, supporting them proficiently through an established programme of induction, supervision and annual appraisals. Every practitioner has the opportunity to improve their knowledge through regular training and to progress their personal development, through senior and management pathways. Opportunities for promotion within the company are good, which results in the company retaining committed and highly-qualified practitioners, who are able to use their knowledge and expertise to enhance the provision for children.

Nursery leaders and practitioners work extremely well with parents and others, creating a mutual trust and an exceptionally effective two-way flow of information. Parents spoken to at the time of the inspection shared extremely complimentary comments and views of the nursery's managers, the practitioners working directly with their children, the environment and the excellent methods of communication. Parents comments include 'I could not speak more highly of this nursery and the care my child receives' and 'the key persons really get to know children, which fills me with confidence'. Partnerships with other early years settings that children attend are robust, enabling key persons to share relevant information about individual children's learning. This helps both settings build and develop on the learning that takes place across all areas of children's lives. Managers and key persons have extremely effective links with other professionals in the local area and work closely with them to bridge any gaps in children's learning and to support families.

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	EY472643
Local authority	Essex
Inspection number	952508
Type of provision	Full-time provision
Registration category	Childcare - Non-Domestic
Age range of children	0 - 5
Total number of places	51
Number of children on roll	105
Name of provider	Seymour House Limited
Date of previous inspection	not applicable
Telephone number	01206852525

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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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