

# Seymour House Day Nursery School

Hurst Court, 230 Springfield Road, Chelmsford, CM2 6BP

<b>Inspection date</b>	21/07/2014
Previous inspection date	Not Applicable

<b>The quality and standards of the early years provision</b>	<b>This inspection:</b>	
	Previous inspection:	1 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

- The quality of teaching is exceptionally high. Practitioners use an exciting and stimulating range of learning experiences imaginatively, to provide children with the freedom to develop their own ideas, interests and learning styles.
- Children are expertly protected from harm as practitioners and management demonstrate meticulous knowledge of procedures, and their individual responsibilities, with regards to safeguarding children.
- Strong and well-established partnerships exist between the nursery, parents, schools and other early years settings which children attend. This ensures that key persons are able to quickly identify any gaps in children's learning and seek appropriate interventions to support their development.
- Children are extremely confident, settled and happy in the nursery environment. Key persons manage the well-considered settling-in procedures effectively, to ensure that every child begins their nursery life in a positive way.
- Management are highly innovative. The team of managers, based at the nursery and within the larger company, expertly support the practitioners to create an atmosphere of trust, where every person feels valued and respected. Extremely robust monitoring and supervision ensures that the nursery constantly operates to its extremely 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.  
The inspector held discussions with the area coordinator, the Head of Early Years Practice, the Special Educational Need Coordinator, practitioners and children at appropriate times throughout the inspection.
- The inspector looked at documentation to evidence the suitability and qualifications of all adults working with children.  
The inspector looked at a range of records, including children's details, accident and medication records, information about children's learning and development, written risk assessments, written policies and a selection of other documentation.
- The inspector took account of the views of parents, spoken to at the time of the inspection, and through written comments shared through parental questionnaires.

## 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 converted domestic house in Chelmsford, Essex. The nursery employs 18 members of staff, of whom 16 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 7.45am until 6pm. There are currently 105 children attending who are in the early years age group. The nursery provides funded early education for three- and four-year-old children.

### What the setting needs to do to improve further

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

- introduce real-life resources in the role-play area, to enhance the already superb opportunities children have to express themselves and to enable them to build on prior learning.

## Inspection judgements

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

Practitioner's extensive knowledge of how children learn and how to deliver an effective educational programme, results in children excelling in their learning. Children are extremely keen, motivated and excited about learning in a stimulating and interesting environment. Key persons have a sharp focus on every child's development, which enables them to tailor planning to meet every child's individual learning needs and styles. Children excitedly participate in a wide and varied range of learning opportunities, guiding much of their knowledge themselves. Key persons use the nursery's exemplary systems for assessing and monitoring children's development, to provide other practitioners and parents with an acute and accurate assessment of every child's learning. Parents are encouraged to play an extremely active role in their children's development, by viewing their learning stories regularly and attending open evenings to discuss their children's progress and next steps in learning. Key persons plan a varied programme of activities to enhance children's knowledge, many of which stem from individual children's interests and ideas. For example, children show an interest in insects in the two-to-three-year-old room. Practitioners use this interest to create exciting spaces for children to explore plastic insects and other animals. They imaginatively present environments for the children to extend their thinking, for instance, the insects live in a large tray of soil and leaves. Green bowls of ice are placed in the tray to capture the children's interest. Children touch the ice bowls and talk about how cold it feels. They also notice that the mound of ice has got smaller. Practitioners ask children why they think this has happened, and they proficiently explain that the ice has melted and turned to water. An underwater scene is created by

practitioners placing tin foil on the table, covering it in hair gel and then covering the whole area with plastic film. Children explore the tactile features of this presentation, as well as using it in imaginative play with a range of underwater plastic animals.

Children are actively encouraged to express their feelings, through practitioners introducing a wide and exciting range of resources. For example, they use large dolls to discuss feelings and to talk about the characters of the dolls. A range of puppets with different emotional faces have recently been purchased, to encourage children to express themselves through puppet shows and games. Practitioners recognise that children show great interest in the puppets and use this interest to encourage them to make a selection of puppets from various creative materials, such as socks and paper bags. Children in the nursery class room use 'mini-me' characters in their small-world play to act out real and imaginary stories. The 'mini-mes' are photographs of each child, laminated and cut out to create a small figure, which they use to place themselves in a variety of play situations. Effective role-play areas are provided across the nursery for children to develop their imaginative skills and to explore imaginary experiences. There are further opportunities to enhance the already superb provision for role play, for example, by introducing some real kitchen tools and other resources, so that older children can relate to real-life experiences and build on prior learning. Children communicate extremely well, enthusiastically participating in large and small group discussions. Practitioners effectively support this aspect of development through lively discussions, clear and precise use of questioning skills, and appropriate activities to promote children's thinking.

Younger children within the nursery have superb opportunities to develop across the three prime areas of learning. For example, practitioners proficiently encourage baby's emergent speech, by responding to their sounds and babbles, and naming new objects. They encourage children to develop physical skills by placing developmentally appropriate resources within their reach, and making good use of furniture to encourage children to progress from a non-mobile to a mobile position. Key persons help children to develop strong attachments to the adults caring for them and to the other children, to enhance their social skills and emotional well-being. Children throughout the nursery are actively encouraged to explore a wide range of messy and creative materials. For example, the youngest children enthusiastically mix a range of dried pasta, shaving foam and flour together to create a lovely mixture. They have great fun rubbing their hands in the mixture and smelling it. Practitioners effectively support children's learning and exploration of these materials by asking them what it smells and feels like, and encouraging them to experiment with the texture. Older children's participation, in the excellent range of activities provided for them, helps to prepare them for the next stages in their learning at school. Children proficiently write their own names and some children are reading simple books. Children understand the importance of developing good listening skills and carefully follow instructions.

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

Children are extremely comfortable, settled and content in the nursery environment. Their first experiences of nursery life are superbly managed due to key persons and parents working closely together to follow the nursery's clear settling-in procedures. Key persons

obtain an extensive amount of information about each child, to enable them to develop a picture of their home-life, pets, siblings and extended family. This enables key persons to talk confidently about the important people in children's lives, to help them to develop a sense of belonging. The effective key-person system ensures that each child has a special person to bond with, and a buddy system provides a second special person to support that child if their main key person is absent. Children's emotional well-being is superbly promoted through every aspect of their nursery life. Practitioners highly value children's individual personalities and build in activities to help them to shine in their specific strengths. The whole nursery is full of photographs of children's families, starting in the baby room, where these are made into 'all about me' books. In the older children's rooms, the photographs are displayed on and in cardboard boxes. Children have constant access to these resources, and are able to share them with practitioners and their friends.

Practitioners make excellent use of the nursery environment, creating communication-friendly spaces and areas for role play in many of the smaller rooms and cupboards within the building. A recently developed undercover area, leading from the nursery to the extensive and well-equipped garden, provides an excellent area for children to explore a range of media and creative materials. It also provides a cosy and well-resourced quiet area for children to sit and think. The large nursery garden is effectively used by practitioners to provide exciting learning opportunities to cover all seven areas of learning. For example, a literacy house contains a wide range of books and writing equipment with comfortable areas to sit, draw, write or read. Children grow their own flowers and vegetables, and explore nature in the wildlife areas. Practitioners facilitate children's exploratory nature by providing an excellent range of learning experiences, both indoors and outdoors.

Children's self-esteem and confidence is superbly promoted by experienced practitioners, who expertly recognise the importance of ensuring that children are emotionally secure. Practitioners use constant praise and encouragement to ensure that children feel valued and respected, and understand that their feelings are important. This results in children who behave well, and understand the nursery's rules and boundaries. Practitioners are superb role models, who speak to each other and to children in a respectful and caring manner. Children develop superb independence skills. They are effectively encouraged to make choices and decisions for themselves, and to guide much of their nursery day. For example, at mealtimes, children help to serve their own meals and snacks, and are actively encouraged to pour drinks for themselves throughout the day. Children enjoy an extremely well-balanced and nutritious diet, which takes account of the individual dietary needs of all children. Children are provided with excellent opportunities to learn how to manage their self-care. For example, they know that it is important to wash their hands after using the toilet and before eating food to remove germs. Practitioners build suitable and informative activities into their planning, helping to promote this aspect of children's development. Children are expertly prepared for the next stages in their learning, for example, key persons effectively manage children's moves from one room to another. Parents are encouraged to share information with key persons, about changes that happen in the children's home life, so that key persons can support both the children and their families through these changes.

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

Management and practitioners demonstrate extremely rigorous and thorough knowledge of their responsibilities with regard to protecting the children in their care. Practitioner's safeguarding training begins with their very first introduction to working life at the nursery, as they complete an online safeguarding course as part of their induction. Ongoing safeguarding training ensures that every practitioner is well-qualified to identify any safeguarding issues, and to deal with them swiftly and effectively. Designated persons, and those holding safeguarding or safety responsibilities, complete more in-depth training courses to ensure they are confident to fulfil their position and to support other practitioners. All adults working at the nursery are appropriately vetted. Proof of the rigorous checks, used to assess their suitability, are available on file. Security at the nursery is given extremely high priority. All visitors have their identity checked before being able to enter the main nursery building, and are asked to sign in and out of the visitor's book. Children are extremely safe within the provision as practitioners follow robust safety checks each day, and complete thorough and rigorous risk assessments of every aspect of the nursery. Exceptionally high standards are maintained throughout the nursery because every practitioner and manager takes personal responsibility for ensuring children's safety.

This nursery is one of eight in a small chain of nurseries run and managed by the same providers. The management structure currently in place, is one born of years of fine tuning and constant review, resulting in a model that works exceptionally well. The registered providers oversee all of the operational procedures and make decisions on policy. Area coordinators support each of the nurseries, by visiting them regularly and feeding any problems or ideas back to the registered providers. Within each nursery there are two managers, one of whom predominantly deals with recruitment, parents and documentation, while the other manager has the role of Head of Early Years Practice and manages the way in which the Early Years Foundation Stage is delivered across the setting. Leadership of the nursery is dynamic and inspirational, resulting in a highly motivated workforce of dedicated and professional early educators. The Head of Early Years Practice meticulously monitors all aspects of the educational programme, planning and assessment. Close working with each key person enables the Head of Early Years Practice to evaluate their knowledge of the children in their group. This ensures that every key person is providing highly effective activities for children, and that planning provides optimum challenges for all children. The Head of Early Years Practice also monitors children's development and can provide evidence to show that all children make exceptional progress in their learning. Practitioners use rigorous systems to assess children's development and demonstrate an acute knowledge of their individual learning needs. Managers use a highly professional system for the supervision and appraisal of practitioners to build an exceptionally high level of support. This enables managers to offer practitioners mentoring where needed, and provides a forum for planning future training needs and interests. Rigorous self-evaluation and procedures, for using reflective practice, effectively provide the nursery team with a sharp focus on their strengths and weaknesses.

Parents are extremely involved in their children's nursery life, as key persons make time to communicate effectively with them on a daily basis. They are provided with a written account of the younger children's day and a verbal account for older children. Parents, spoken to at the time of the inspection, share extremely complimentary comments on the friendly approach and professionalism of practitioners. Parents also comment on the way in which their child's key person takes time to get to know their individual children and tailors their care accordingly. Other comments reflect the positive way in which the key persons ask parents how they would like them to deal with the changing behaviour and needs of younger children. Partnerships in the wider context, for example, with other early years professionals and other early years settings which children attend, are robust. Managers and key persons share relevant information with other professionals to support children and to help to close any gaps in their learning.

## 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

<b>Unique reference number</b>	EY472673
<b>Local authority</b>	Essex
<b>Inspection number</b>	953304
<b>Type of provision</b>	Full-time provision
<b>Registration category</b>	Childcare - Non-Domestic
<b>Age range of children</b>	0 - 5
<b>Total number of places</b>	50
<b>Number of children on roll</b>	105
<b>Name of provider</b>	Seymour House Limited
<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	not applicable
<b>Telephone number</b>	01245495455

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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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