

Sycamore House Day Nursery

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

Inspection date	03/07/2014
Previous inspection date	22/10/2013

The quality and standards of the early years provision	This inspection:	
	Previous inspection:	
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

- Staff within the nursery have a good understanding about how to support children to develop the characteristics they need to be successful learners.
- Partnerships with parents and carers are purposeful and clearly enable staff to understand and meet the individual care needs of each child.
- There are clear and robust procedures in place for staff recruitment and safeguarding children from harm. In addition, regular suitability checks are carried out to ensure that staff in the nursery continue to remain suitable to work and be in contact with children.
- A good range of policies and procedures are shared with parents and carers and implemented in practice, which supports the smooth daily management of the nursery.

It is not yet outstanding because

- There is scope to further enhance learning opportunities for children to enable them to explore an extended range of information and communication technology equipment and their understanding of differing backgrounds and languages.
- There is room to provide further opportunities to encourage and extend information sharing with parents and carers, with regard to the children's ongoing achievements and learning at home.

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 spoke with the manager, the owner and directors of the nursery, along with members of staff and children, at appropriate times throughout the inspection.
- The inspector observed activities in areas used by the children.
The inspector looked at a selection of policies, procedures and relevant documentation, including safeguarding records and suitability checks. In addition, the inspector reviewed written compliments to the nursery from parents currently using the service.
- The inspector carried out joint discussions with the manager and provider in relation to making observations of the children's play, learning and progress.

Inspector

Lynn Clements

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's Stortford, Hertfordshire. There is an enclosed area available for outdoor play. The nursery opens from Monday to Friday for 51 weeks of the year. Sessions are from 7am until 7pm and children attend for a variety of sessions. The nursery provides funded early education for three- and four-year-old children and there are 65 children on roll. The nursery provides care and support for children with special educational needs and/or disabilities and for those children who speak English as an additional language. The nursery employs 15 members of childcare staff. Of these, two hold appropriate early years qualifications at level 2, nine hold qualifications at level 3 and one has completed training to degree level. The nursery also employs a qualified, full-time cook.

What the setting needs to do to improve further

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

- enrich opportunities for parents and carers to extend information sharing related to their children's ongoing achievements and learning at home, to provide staff with an enhanced knowledge and understanding about what each child knows and can do
- develop learning opportunities for children by extending their access to an increased range of information and communication technology equipment
- extend the range of printed media and resources within all areas of the nursery to reflect the differing backgrounds and variety of home languages spoken by the children.

Inspection judgements

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

The nursery has very clear procedures in place with regard to assessment for learning. These begin with the children's starting points, which are based on their age and ability. Prior to placement, important information is obtained from parents and carers, in relation to their children's overall development and achievements. This is recorded in 'All About Me' records, which provide members of staff with an insight into the children's interests and initial abilities. Staff are then able to plan a welcoming and inviting environment to capture the children's interest and participation, helping to promote a smooth and happy entry into the nursery. Every child has a key member of staff, who is responsible for

observing, assessing and planning for their next steps in learning. Key staff also provide a pertinent link for parents and carers within the nursery. Assessment for learning takes account of both the prime and specific areas of the Early Years Foundation Stage curriculum and what progress the children are making towards the early learning goals. Summative assessments are made at key times. This includes progress checks for children between the ages of two and three years. This attention to detail makes sure that all children are making good strides in their learning and development and any gaps are quickly identified and addressed. It further ensures that each child is fully supported in acquiring the skills they need for later learning and their move onto school.

Partnerships with parents and carers are good. Members of staff take time to share ideas about how the children's learning and development can be extended at home. However, there is scope to further extend these opportunities to support parents and carers in sharing ongoing information about their children's learning and achievements at home. This helps key staff to absorb additional and relevant information about each child to further support them based on what they already know and can do. This ensures staff can plan and build on the individual learning requirements for each child.

The children move freely around their classrooms. They are supported by members of staff, who know them well and use positive teaching techniques. For example, staff provide time for the children to listen, think and then respond during conversations as they play and learn. Staff scaffold learning as they stand back, while the children engage and develop their own play. They remain aware and alert, stepping in to support the children and extend their learning with ideas or resources at appropriate times. Children throughout the nursery are very competent and confident communicators. This is because staff take the time to ask open-ended questions, which encourage the children to think that little bit harder. They help the children to interpret meaning and context, using facial gestures, intonation and actions. There is no bias in their practice in relation to race, gender or disability and all children enjoy a wide and balanced range of purposeful activities and learning opportunities. While there are currently no children on roll who speak English as an additional language, there are children attending for whom English is their second language. However, there is scope to enrich opportunities for children, by enabling them to further explore each other's backgrounds and cultural heritages, helping them to increase their understanding about similarities and differences. Staff provide good support and work positively with other professionals, making sure that any children with additional learning needs are fully supported. Babies respond well by turning their heads when their names are called and moving, rolling and stretching within the well-organised space. Toddlers have a wonderful time as they splash in large water trays, filled with bubbles which conceal hidden treasure beneath. This sparks their curiosity as they delve their hands into the water, feeling around and then grasping and fishing out their finds. The activity has been well thought through, with staff making observations of their curiosity and encouraging them to describe their finds, using simple sentences. This activity also provides staff with the opportunity to observe the children's developing mathematical understanding in relation to sorting, comparing and matching sets together. For example, children group different animal families together. An extra dimension is seized upon by members of staff, as they learn that most of the children are also competent in recreating the differing noises made by animals, such as elephants. Children enjoy investigating what things do, as they become familiar with simple equipment, such

as battery-operated resources. However, there is scope to extend their access to information and communication technology equipment by providing increased learning opportunities for children to find out how things work and what technology can be used for. Children throughout the nursery enjoy good quality learning opportunities, supported by keen staff who encourage them to develop their confidence and positive attitudes to learning.

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

The emotional, social and personal developmental needs of each child are promoted and supported well across the nursery. This enables the children to settle and enjoy joining activities and trying out their own ideas, without fear of failure. All staff are sensitive to the individual needs of the children in their care. This is clearly aided by the good initial organisation of information sharing with parents prior to placement. Time and effort made at the beginning, means that all relevant information relating to the individual care needs of each child is accurately recorded and understood. In addition, this means that parents and carers can leave their children and be confident in the knowledge that their care needs will be met and respected. Children are emotionally well prepared for the next stage in their learning because staff provide good support to prepare them for their transitions, both within the nursery and their move onto school.

Staff help children to learn to be independent and encourage them to manage their own personal needs. Children are competent at managing their individual needs relative to their ages. Attention to healthy eating and access to plenty of fresh air and exercise, provides children with good opportunities to learn about the importance of developing a healthy lifestyle. Weekly swimming lessons offer additional activities, which promote healthy living, but also provide the children with opportunities to increase their understanding with regard to water safety. Children are gaining an understanding of risk through activities that encourage them to explore their environment freely, under the watchful eyes of staff.

There is a well-resourced and welcoming environment, both in and outdoors, which supports children's all-round development and provides a range of experiences that improve their independence and cooperation. Children's behaviour shows that they feel safe in the nursery. They are able to share concerns with their key person or other adults. Staff are good role models. They are deployed well, apply consistent ways to manage behaviour and provide good guidance for children about what is acceptable. Relationships are strong and children are learning to respect each other's differences.

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

Safeguarding procedures are robust. All staff undertake regular training in order to make sure that children are protected from harm. Clear child protection procedures are in place, which are shared with parents and carers and are fully understood by all members of staff working in the nursery. Everyone is aware of their responsibility in relation to reporting concerns to the relevant authorities and maintaining pertinent records. All members of

staff and management undergo suitability checks and no children are left unsupervised with visitors to the setting, who have not had the necessary Disclosure and Barring Service checks. Clear attendance registers for children and staff are well maintained. Staff deployment is good and ratios are consistently met at all times. Risk assessments are vigorous and conducted throughout the inside, outside and for outings. This is to make sure that the children remain safe and secure in the nursery and are protected from potential hazards, while out and about in the local community. All records required by legislation are in place and updated correctly. Policies and procedures are implemented consistently. Attention is given to making sure that records relating to children and their families are kept secure and that confidentiality is respected at all times.

Required training, such as paediatric first aid is undertaken by staff. This means that they can provide appropriate care and comfort for children following an accident. Attention to induction, ongoing supervisions and annual appraisals, means that all staff working with the children have the necessary qualifications and skills to effectively support their learning and development. The professional development of staff is clearly part of the overall continuous development programme of the nursery. On-site training is offered by the provider, who is a qualified and registered trainer and all staff are committed to attending local authority and further education training. For example, one member of staff has recently completed a degree in early years education. A secure understanding of the areas of learning and how children acquire skills, along with good monitoring and tracking of development, helps children to make good progress towards the early learning goals.

The management team and staff have been proactive in addressing recommendations raised at their last inspection. Self-evaluation and reflective practice includes all staff, parents, carers and children. The management team and staff encourage families using the service, to share ideas about ways the nursery can be adapted to meet their care requirements over time and continue to improve opportunities for the children. Parents and carers find all members of staff within the nursery to be warm, friendly and very approachable. They enjoy being kept up to date with their child's individual learning and development and express their delight in the wide range of interesting activities they enjoy on a daily basis. Partnerships with parents, external agencies and other providers are well established and make a strong contribution to meeting children's needs.

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. We re-inspect nurseries and pre-schools judged as requires improvement within 12 months of the date of 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		There were no children present at the time of the inspection. The inspection judgement is that the provider continues to meet the requirements for registration.
Not met		There were no children present at the time of the inspection. 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	980321
Type of provision	Full-time provision
Registration category	Childcare - Non-Domestic
Age range of children	0 - 5
Total number of places	66
Number of children on roll	65
Name of provider	Sycamore House Day Nursery Ltd
Date of previous inspection	22/10/2013
Telephone number	07968 500336

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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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