

Catherine House Day Nursery

54 Billing Road, Northampton, Northamptonshire, NN1 5DB

Inspection date

01/12/2014

Previous inspection date

26/03/2009

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

- The quality of teaching for older children enables them to make good progress in their learning, as practitioners know the children well and individualise activities to ensure they derive the most from their time at the nursery.
- Partnerships with parents, external agencies and other providers ensure that children's needs are met and that timely intervention is secured to make sure they receive the support they need.
- Children develop strong, trusting relationships with practitioners, who know them well and work hard to help them to feel settled and secure.

It is not yet good because

- Practitioners in the baby room, lack enthusiasm and are less effective in helping these very young children develop the skills and aptitudes of curious, positive learners.
- Children's unwanted behaviours are not consistently managed well throughout the nursery. The variable boundaries do not, therefore, help all children learn to manage difficult feelings.
- Practitioners are not always clear about who holds specialist roles within the nursery and the programme of training does not focus on ensuring that training is provided to enable practitioners to enhance their practice or fulfil the duties of such roles.

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 the nursery and talked with practitioners.
- The inspector viewed the nursery's indoor and outdoor learning environments.
The inspector looked at children's assessment records, planning documentation,
- evidence of the suitability of practitioners and a range of other documentation, including the safeguarding procedures.
- The inspector took account of the views of parents spoken to at the inspection.
- The inspector reviewed the provider's self-evaluation form.

Inspector

Deborah Hunt

Full report

Information about the setting

Catherine House Day Nursery was registered in 1992 on the Early Years Register and the compulsory and voluntary parts of the Childcare Register. It is one of six nurseries run by Buds Limited. The nursery operates from seven main rooms in a converted house in Northampton. A slope to the rear entrance means that the premises are accessible to all children. Children have access to the fully enclosed outdoor play area. The nursery is open Monday to Friday, all year round, except for bank holidays. Opening hours are from 7.45am until 6pm. Children attend for a variety of sessions. The setting provides funded early education for two-, three- and four-year-old children. There are currently 40 children on roll, all of whom are in the early years age range. The nursery supports a number of children, who speak English as an additional language and children with special educational needs and/or disabilities. The nursery employs five practitioners, three of whom hold appropriate early years qualifications at level 3. One practitioner holds a qualification at level 2. The nursery is a member of the National Day Nurseries Association and the Preschool Learning Alliance and receives support from the local authority.

What the setting needs to do to improve further

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

- ensure that all practitioners guide children's activities by considering the different ways they learn and reflecting this within practice, for example, by allowing children to play, explore and engage in active learning, particularly in the baby room.

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

- improve the programme of training and continuous professional development to ensure that all practitioners manage children's behaviour successfully and continually improve their knowledge, understanding and practice
- evaluate the impact of training designed to improve children's well-being particularly with regard to practitioners, who hold key roles and ensure that all practitioners are clear about who these individuals are.

Inspection judgements

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

The nursery offers children interesting, varied educational programmes, which provide the majority of them with challenging learning opportunities. However, the quality of teaching across the nursery is variable. Practitioners within the pre-school and toddler rooms offer children high quality learning experiences and children make good progress. For example, in the pre-school and toddler rooms, practitioners make good use of open-ended questions to promote children's creative thinking. Whereas in the baby room, practitioners lack enthusiasm and do not routinely support children's early language development and understanding. As a result, although, staff offer children a wide selection of activities, they receive too little support or interaction as they explore and investigate. Practitioners across the nursery use a common system of planning, observation and assessment. Children's interests are closely reflected as observations carried out inform planning for the following week. Children's next steps in learning are incorporated within planned activities and practitioners monitor the coverage of each area of learning. Therefore, across most of the nursery, children's learning is effectively promoted.

Children learn through a broad range of enjoyable experiences, which occupy and engage them, although, in the baby room, some activities lack a good level of challenge. This is because practitioners lack experience and knowledge about how to use planned activities to enhance babies learning in a way, which is tailored to their individual needs. For example, children are offered an activity with a selection of natural and man-made resources, soft toys and interactive toys. However, the input from practitioners does not encourage them to investigate or explore what is on offer and no language is used to describe other activities children select. Practitioners sit cuddling other babies as they feed and comfort them but they make no effort to offer other children words to describe what they are doing and children are largely left to occupy themselves. This means that practitioners miss opportunities to extend children's learning, so progress is slowed. Practitioners in the pre-school and toddler rooms, demonstrate a clear understanding of how to promote children's learning and development and in these rooms teaching is good. For example, toddlers experience learning on many levels as they explore texture and learn about colours during exciting messy play with chick peas and porridge. They add glitter and different food colourings and learn about how the resources feel when wet and dry. Their enthusiastic response is further enhanced as the highly skilled practitioner tailors their conversation to meet their specific interests and next steps in their learning. In the pre-school room, children create habitats for their chosen animals as they learn about hibernation. The motivational practitioner encourages their thinking as they create a game using a bee-shaped programmable toy to search out where animals are sleeping. Children gather round and become deeply involved as they describe to the practitioner what the programmable toy is doing. When the toy becomes worn down, they discuss what food a bee might need to give it energy, recalling previous learning as they tell the practitioner bees eat aphids.

Children learn about their local area, develop respect for other people and different cultures and religions as they are taken out into the local community. They enjoy frequent walks to the local park and trips to the shops. Children recently visited the fire station, library and sung harvest festival songs at the local elderly people's residential home. Children always come back to the nursery excited and love sharing their experiences with their peers and other practitioners. They reflect these experiences through their play, for example, turning the playhouse outside into a fire station. Practitioners hold discussions

with parents to gain information about children as they begin attending. Each child has an individual learning plan, which details their likes, dislikes and interests and they find out about children's learning at home. This means that children settle easily into the nursery and most assessments of them enable practitioners to select appropriate areas through which to develop their learning further. Practitioners share information with parents about children's progress and next stages for learning. Parents are welcomed into the nursery to talk about their children's progress and are invited to sessions, which help them understand how their children learn through play. This offers children a consistent approach to their early years experience. The nursery also works closely in partnership with external agencies in support of helping children with special educational needs and/or disabilities to make progress from their initial starting points. Children speaking English as an additional language feel valued as practitioners use key words in their home language to help them as they learn English.

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

Practitioners throughout the nursery form strong, trusting bonds with children through the well-established key-person arrangements, which promote children's confidence and independence. Children's care is individualised as attention is paid to their specific needs through the care plan that each child has. Practitioners complete a settling-in assessment four weeks after a child has started and share this with their parents. Practitioners comfort children when feeding them or if they become upset, so they are comfortable and relaxed in their company. Parents know who their child's special person is and have regular contact to talk about their child's needs. This ongoing update helps practitioners provide children with continuity in their care routines between home and the nursery. For example, practitioners encourage breast feeding mothers to come into the nursery to feed their children and work with parents with regards to weaning. This helps children feel valued and they settle easily facilitating their capacity for learning. The nursery environment is welcoming and very well resourced. Practitioners lay out activities well to encourage children to explore the equipment on offer independently. As a result, children's independence is effectively encouraged. Children throughout the nursery have access to a well-resourced and inviting sensory room. They love to sit in the open cube, watching projected images on the walls and bubbles as they rise in the bubble tower. Babies sleep in comfort in a designated room where their unique bedding is freshly laundered on site. As a result of the thought given to their care needs, children are motivated and ready to learn.

Practitioners take good care to ensure children are safe in their care. Children generally behave appropriately for their stage of development, although, some aspects of behaviour are less effectively managed. For example, younger practitioners do not always successfully manage some exuberant boys or help the youngest children learn how to take accountability for their actions. Children learn to take turns, such as during singing activities and to share resources. Practitioners teach older children to take turns and share resources. Children develop independence and learn to be helpful as they are allocated a range of jobs as they come into nursery each day and self-register. They are emotionally well prepared for their move to school. Practitioners arm them with skills, which build their confidence and the nursery works with the local school. Children learn about ways in

which they can grow up healthy and strong as they engage in daily physical activity and learn about how to eat healthily. The nursery offers a four week rotated menu of freshly cooked, nutritional meals and snacks prepared on site by the nursery cook. Babies are taken out everyday, offering them a different perspective on their world as they visit local parks and shops in addition to using the outdoor learning environment within the nursery. Older children have fun as they explore their growing physical abilities both inside and outside through interesting, challenging activities. For example, they love to use the all-weather suits, as they puddle, jump and listen to the sound of the rain through the foil, which they hold on their heads. They develop their knowledge and understanding as they are offered exciting outings to local places of interest, such as the fire station. Practitioners capture their enthusiasm and extend their learning on their return by transforming the outside playhouse into a fire station. Children become firemen as they use hoses and water to put out their imaginary fires.

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

Practitioners understand how to safeguard children. This is because they know the policies and procedures to follow and where to gain additional advice and support if needed. Practitioners are aware of potential risks and hazards to children and act appropriately to help keep children safe. Practitioners take care when taking children for walks and risk assess venues before going on any outings. They teach children to hold onto the stair rails as they climb and descend the stairs, singing their safety song as they do so. Practitioners complete opening and closing risk assessments everyday and offer children reminders to ensure that they remain safe during routine activities, such as mealtimes. The nursery deal with recruitment through their central head office function and safer recruitment procedures are followed. New practitioners are subject to full vetting and a comprehensive induction period. During this time, they are regularly monitored and assessed. There are suitable arrangements for performance management. The manager meets with practitioners to discuss issues regarding the nursery's organisation but there is not sufficient focus on improving the quality of teaching. This means that the quality of teaching is inconsistent across the team and not always of a good standard. The management team shows ability to drive improvement. There is a joint aspiration to improve and a development plan that identifies some ways to do this. The nursery team meet monthly and a system of annual appraisal is in place.

The management team uses systems to check that the educational programmes are being delivered. The attention paid ensures that all aspects of each area of learning are covered and therefore, activities provide interesting experiences and challenge to most children. Children's learning and development are assessed and their progress is tracked. This means that management are able to identify any groups of children, who may be making slower progress, in order to make necessary changes. Managers monitor practitioners' performance and support is offered to help practitioners improve their practice. However, this has not resulted in sufficient improvement in practice in the baby room. As a result, young children's progress is less effectively promoted. The programme of training and continuous professional development is not sufficiently targeting the skills that practitioners need to fulfil required roles or help them to manage children's behaviour.

Practitioners work with external agencies to provide some children with additional support. For example, staff work with speech and language therapists and implement their recommendations to aid children's progress, so they begin to catch up. The management team encourages partnership working with parents and these make a sound contribution to supporting children's well-being. Practitioners work hard to involve parents in their children's learning and development. For example, each room issues their own newsletter and has its own parent board with a wealth of useful information. Parents know what activities children are offered daily and practitioners advise them of their progress, such as through the progress check between the age of two and three years. Practitioners prepare children well emotionally for their move to school. Children's confidence is raised because practitioners promote close links with the local school and teachers from all schools that they move onto, visit them at the nursery. This allows children to become familiar with new people and they learn about their new school, which helps prepare them well for the move.

The Childcare Register

The requirements for the compulsory part of the Childcare Register are	Met
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The requirements for the voluntary part of the Childcare Register are	Met
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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	219903
Local authority	Northamptonshire
Inspection number	865820
Type of provision	
Registration category	Childcare - Non-Domestic
Age range of children	0 - 17
Total number of places	55
Number of children on roll	40
Name of provider	Buds Limited
Date of previous inspection	26/03/2009
Telephone number	01604 633109

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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
Manchester
M1 2WD

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