

Southampton University Early Years Centre

Building 41, University Road, Southampton, Hampshire, SO17 1BJ



Inspection date

Previous inspection date

15 April 2015

24 March 2014

The quality and standards of the early years provision	This inspection:	Good	2
	Previous inspection:	Requires Improvement	3
How well the early years provision meets the needs of the range of children who attend		Good	2
The contribution of the early years provision to the well-being of children		Good	2
The effectiveness of the leadership and management of the early years provision		Good	2
The setting meets legal requirements for early years settings			

Summary of key findings for parents

This provision is good

- Effective leadership and management have brought about many improvements. In particular, the strong focus on improving the professional development of staff has had a positive effect on children's well-being and learning.
- Staff are fully involved in the effective self-evaluation process. Staff provide a safe environment for children regardless of their ages, abilities or backgrounds.
- The management structure, effective induction and ongoing supervision procedures ensure that all staff are clear about their roles and responsibilities.
- Staff forge strong partnerships with parents, carers and other professionals involved in children's care and learning, which helps them to meet children's individual needs well.
- The well-established key-person system helps children to form secure attachments with staff. This approach promotes children's emotional well-being effectively, and provides a strong base for their learning now and in the future.
- Staff use the system for observation and assessment effectively to help them plan and provide tailored support for each child. All children, including those learning English as an additional language, make good progress from their starting points on entry and develop the skills they require for their future learning.
- Staff meet children's physical needs well and follow children's individual care routines. Children benefit from home-cooked meals, which promote their good health.

It is not yet outstanding because:

- Staff working with children aged two years and over, do not always promote children's literacy skills highly effectively.

What the setting needs to do to improve further

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

- raise teaching to a consistently very high quality by increasing planned opportunities for children to see letters of the alphabet and learn to use letters and sounds in their play; by providing more chances for children to see and learn to recognise their names, and by seizing spontaneous chances to promote these.

Inspection activities

- The inspector observed staff and how they interact with children during play and learning activities, and how the routines and activities meet children's needs.
- The inspector had discussions with the manager, all tiers of staff, and with children and parents to gain their views of the nursery.
- The inspector undertook a joint observation with the manager.
- The inspector sampled a range of documentation, including children's records, assessment and planning documents, staff suitability, induction and safeguarding procedures.
- The inspector discussed the nursery's self-evaluation and how staff use the action plans to bring about continuous improvement.

Inspector

Jacqueline Munden

Inspection findings

How well the early years provision meets the needs of the range of children who attend. This is good

Staff have a good understanding of how children learn and they focus on promoting their communication and language skills well. They provide a good balance of adult-led activities and opportunities for children of all ages to initiate their own play. Pre-school children were captivated as they explored ice and learnt that it melted. Staff skilfully worded questions to challenge children and extend their learning. Some children are showing an interest in writing their names. However, staff do not always help capable children to recognise and use letters and their sounds or to recognise their names, to fully promote their literacy skills. Children benefit from spending lots of time learning and playing outdoors. Older children increased their counting skills as they played, 'What's the time Mr Wolf?' Toddlers happily filled watering cans and watered the plants, which helps them to learn about the natural world and builds their muscles. Younger children increased their coordination as they used whisks to make bubbles. Staff encouraged them to use the chunky, easy grip chinks to draw circles, which promoted their early ability to make marks.

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

Staff have a good knowledge of each child and their specific needs. The effective key-person system means staff support children well. A small, consistent staff team builds close bonds with the babies and is sensitive to their needs. Staff make sure that babies have 'tummy time' to strengthen their muscles and that they begin to gain independence as they learn to feed themselves. Staff make children feel valued and included as they use words in children's home languages. They support children effectively when moving to the next room, enabling children and parents to become familiar with the new staff and routines. Children respond well to the effective and consistent methods staff use to help children to manage their feelings and to learn to share and be kind to others.

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

The highly qualified management team has a secure understanding of its role and implements requirements for safeguarding children effectively. Senior staff have attended training to help them understand self-evaluation and how to support staff development. All staff now take an active role in improving areas that benefit the children in the rooms in which they work. This has given staff a greater sense of responsibility and has sparked their enthusiasm. Recent training has led staff to create special areas for talking in the rooms and garden, which promotes children's language skills. Parents report that they feel fully involved in their children's learning and value the advice and support they receive from staff.

Setting details

Unique reference number	EY258679
Local authority	Southampton
Inspection number	1010711
Type of provision	Full-time provision
Registration category	Childcare - Non-Domestic
Age range of children	0 - 5
Total number of places	120
Number of children on roll	194
Name of provider	Southampton University
Date of previous inspection	24 March 2014
Telephone number	023 8059 3465

Southampton Early Years Centre registered in 1976. It operates from a university building in the SO17 area of Southampton. The centre is open each weekday, from 8am to 6pm, all year, except for bank holidays, two weeks between Christmas and New Year, and two additional days over the Easter holiday. The centre provides funded early education for children aged two, three and four years. There are 39 members of staff. Of these, two hold Early Years Professional Status and one is a qualified teacher. A further 32 staff hold appropriate early years qualifications.

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