

Sunhill Montessori Nursery

Spring Garden Lane, BERKHAMSTED, Hertfordshire, HP4 3GY



Inspection date 10 January 2017
Previous inspection date 22 April 2013

The quality and standards of the early years provision	This inspection:	Good	2
	Previous inspection:	Good	2
Effectiveness of the leadership and management		Good	2
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment		Good	2
Personal development, behaviour and welfare		Good	2
Outcomes for children		Good	2

Summary of key findings for parents

This provision is good

- Children have plenty of indoor and outdoor space, which is used flexibly by staff to help meet the needs of different groups of children. The outdoor area is resourced particularly well and planned thoughtfully, to provide a wealth of stimulating and challenging learning opportunities.
- Children make good progress in their learning. Staff know them well and plan a broad programme of activities matched to their interests and developmental needs. Careful monitoring helps to identify where adjustments are needed to accelerate learning further.
- Older children develop particularly good independence skills. They are taught how to manage different fastenings on their clothes so they can dress themselves. Mealtimes are organised very well to enable children to serve themselves and clear away and wash their plates after eating.
- Partnerships are effective. The nursery team forges strong links with local early years settings and schools, in order to share good practice and help children prepare well for school. Staff work collaboratively with health and education professionals to support children who have special educational needs or disabilities.

It is not yet outstanding because:

- Newer staff have not yet had the opportunity to benefit from the full programme of professional development in order to develop their confidence, knowledge and first-rate teaching skills.

What the setting needs to do to improve further

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

- seek additional ways to help newer staff rapidly develop high levels of confidence, knowledge and expert teaching skills in order to build on the already good practice.

Inspection activities

- The inspector observed the quality of teaching during activities indoors and outdoors, and assessed the impact this has on children's learning.
- The inspector spoke with staff and children during the inspection.
- The inspector completed a joint observation with the nursery manager.
- The inspector held a meeting with the nursery manager and provider. She looked at relevant documentation and evidence of the suitability of staff working in the nursery.
- The inspector spoke to a number of parents during the inspection and took account of their views.

Inspector

Hilary Preece

Inspection findings

Effectiveness of the leadership and management is good

The management team maintains high standards through effective self-evaluation and comprehensive monitoring. The manager provides good support for the staff team, many of whom are new and developing their qualifications and skills. She recognises the need to build strong, consistent teams through an established programme of training and development. She observes staff's practice and conducts supervision meetings each month, in order to set personal development targets specific to needs. Safeguarding arrangements are effective. All staff are trained and receive updates at every staff meeting to keep their knowledge current. They demonstrate that safeguarding procedures are implemented without delay and keep thorough records to support their actions. The management team follows safe recruitment practices and completes a range of checks to ensure staff are suitable to work with children.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment is good

Since the last inspection the nursery has increased the range and quality of information gathered from parents about children. This helps determine a more complete picture of each child, which staff take account of when planning children's next steps in learning. Staff use effective teaching strategies and resources to support children's learning, including some Montessori equipment. Some staff use excellent questioning techniques to develop children's language and thinking during child-led play and adult-led activities. They model language clearly to help children's listening skills during stories, songs and conversations. Staff seize learning opportunities during mealtimes to help children understand the world. They encourage children to recall how vegetables are grown and which fruits they used to make smoothies. Children remember that some fruits have seeds inside and others, like strawberries, have seeds on the outside.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare are good

Parents confirm that settling-in arrangements are tailored to their children's needs and work very well. They say staff are welcoming and positive relationships are built on effective communication and sharing of information. Staff instil a culture of safety throughout their practice. They consistently demonstrate to children how to share and explain why some behaviours are unsafe or inappropriate. Staff follow a safety scheme of activities to help children learn about aspects of their physical safety and emotional well-being. They take a pragmatic approach to managing risks within the environment. For example, rather than removing a large puddle of standing water, they allow children to play in the water while providing extra vigilant supervision.

Outcomes for children are good

Children move with confidence. They climb up slopes, balance on narrow planks and negotiate paths and obstacles as they use wheeled toys in the garden. Pre-school children show a keen interest in solving number problems. They use clocks to begin to understand the concept of time and enjoy a range of fun activities to develop early reading and writing skills. This prepares them well for their next stage in learning.

Setting details

Unique reference number	129395
Local authority	Hertfordshire
Inspection number	1063610
Type of provision	Full-time provision
Day care type	Childcare - Non-Domestic
Registers	Early Years Register, Compulsory Childcare Register, Voluntary Childcare Register
Age range of children	0 - 4
Total number of places	87
Number of children on roll	113
Name of registered person	Sunhill Daycare (Europe) Limited
Registered person unique reference number	RP519019
Date of previous inspection	22 April 2013
Telephone number	01442 872398

Sunhill Montessori Nursery was registered in 1999. The nursery employs 31 members of childcare staff. Of these, 16 hold appropriate early years qualifications at level 2 or above. The manager is qualified at level 5 and the assistant manager is qualified at level 6. The nursery opens from Monday to Friday all year round. Sessions are from 7.30am to 6.30pm. The nursery provides funded early education for two-, three- and four-year-old children. It follows an approach based on the Montessori educational philosophy.

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