

St Nicholas Nursery

Bennetts End House, Eastwick Row, Hemel Hempstead, Hertfordshire, HP2 4JQ



Inspection date	1 November 2016
Previous inspection date	10 May 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

- Recruitment and vetting procedures are robust. New staff are supported well through their induction and they quickly gain a good understanding of their roles and responsibilities. Staff are supported to undertake further qualifications and the provider helps them to develop skills that enable them to take on management roles.
- Staff make regular observations and assessments of children's development and use this information to plan for their next steps in learning. The progress of individual and groups of children is tracked continually and any concerns are swiftly addressed.
- Staff's teaching is good and at times excellent. Children choose to involve staff in their imaginative play. Staff use these opportunities to talk to children about the benefits of eating healthy food and the importance of making positive relationships with each other.
- Children who speak English as an additional language are skilfully supported to settle and make good progress. Key persons make time each day to speak to parents to help parents understand children's needs. Children swiftly learn how to make their needs known through speaking basic words in English and using gestures.

It is not yet outstanding because:

- Staff do not always provide sufficient opportunities for energetic play in response to the needs of those children who prefer to be outdoors.

What the setting needs to do to improve further

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

- provide further opportunities to consistently support children who prefer an outdoor learning experience, responding more effectively to their need for energetic play.

Inspection activities

- The inspectors observed activities both indoors and outside.
- The inspectors spoke with staff and children at appropriate times during the day and held a meeting with the manager, care and education manager and provider.
- The lead inspector carried out a joint observation with the manager.
- The inspectors looked at children's records, planning documentation, information about the nursery's self-evaluation, evidence of suitability of staff and a range of other documentation, including policies and procedures.
- The inspectors took account of the views of parents spoken to on the day of the inspection.

Inspector

Jill Hardaker and Michelle Baldock

Inspection findings

Effectiveness of the leadership and management is good

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective. All staff have a secure understanding of how to recognise signs and symptoms of abuse. They know the procedures to follow if they have a concern about a child's welfare or another member of staff's practice. Self-evaluation is effectively used to drive continuous improvements. The views of parents and staff are gained through questionnaires and are reflected in the ongoing plans for the nursery. Staff benefit from regular supervision meetings, where their professional development is given high priority. Staff confidently talk about the positive impact training has on their practice. For example, they have learnt how to recognise different patterns in children's play and learning. This has helped them to plan even more precisely for children's next steps in learning based on their interests and ongoing development.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment is good

Staff provide many opportunities for children to play and explore. They give children time and space to watch and observe activities until they are ready to join in. For example, children who are less confident in exploring messy activities watch what other children are doing. With gentle support from members of staff they soon become involved themselves. Babies enjoy making marks with paint. Staff talk to them about what they are doing and give them the names of the colours they are using. Older children use clay to make volcanos. Staff use factual books to help them to understand how volcanos form and what happens when they erupt. Staff encourage parents to play an active part in children's learning. They regularly share summaries of children's development with parents and receive ongoing information about what children are doing and learning at home.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare are good

Staff encourage children of all ages to be independent. Babies enjoy helping to tidy away toys they have finished playing with. Older children quickly find a brush and dustpan when they notice they have spilt sand on the floor. Mealtimes are sociable occasions where all children help themselves to the healthy food provided. Children's behaviour is good. They play together well and develop effective friendships with their peers. Staff provide some opportunities for children to play in the very extensive outdoor area. Children enjoy playing in the mud kitchen and taking part in parachute games. Staff have identified many children who have little access to outdoors at home and use additional funding for extra resources to support their physical development. However, staff do not always provide sufficient time for these children to benefit fully from experiencing more energetic play.

Outcomes for children are good

All children make good progress, including those children for whom the nursery receives additional funding. Children are quickly gaining the skills they need to be ready to move to their next stage of learning or on to school. Staff support children's mathematical understanding relevant to their age. For example, they introduce numbers through songs with younger children and older children sort different items into sets. Pre-school children use pencils very well. They draw with precise detail and talk about how proud their parents will be when they see how they have written their name.

Setting details

Unique reference number	129392
Local authority	Hertfordshire
Inspection number	1063609
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	1 - 4
Total number of places	74
Number of children on roll	88
Name of registered person	Sunhill Daycare (Europe) Limited
Registered person unique reference number	RP519019
Date of previous inspection	10 May 2013
Telephone number	01442 253488

St Nicholas Nursery was registered in 1992. The nursery employs 15 members of childcare staff, 13 of whom hold appropriate early years qualifications at level 3 or above. The nursery opens Monday to Friday, from 7.30am until 6.30pm, all year round. The nursery provides funded early education for two-, three- and four-year-old children. The nursery also supports children who speak English as an additional language.

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