

Sycamore House Day Nursery

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



Inspection date

18 December 2017

Previous inspection date

18 January 2017

The quality and standards of the early years provision	This inspection:	Good	2
	Previous inspection:	Requires Improvement	3
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

- Management have ambitious plans and have taken effective action to address weaknesses previously identified.
- Staff undertake frequent observations of children, which helps to shape the planning of activities and experiences.
- Children have an allocated key person to support them and their families. Children form close attachments with and seek comfort from their key person. Children benefit from robust settling-in procedures which are adapted to support those that need more help.
- Children behave well. They are kind and helpful. For example, they develop their independence by helping their friends find lids for bottles as they help to tidy up after activities.
- Parents comment that staff share information about their child and discuss their overall progress. Staff work closely with professionals and parents to ensure that children, including those who have special educational needs (SEN) and/or disabilities, get the support they need to reduce any gaps in learning.

It is not yet outstanding because:

- Professional development is not precisely focused on developing an expert knowledge of teaching. Managers have not fully explored ways to continually build on the quality of staff's practice to help children make the best possible progress.
- At times, children with dietary requirements do not have enough opportunities to be independent and make the same choices as their friends at mealtimes.

What the setting needs to do to improve further

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

- seek further ways to enhance professional development opportunities that focus more specifically on developing an expert knowledge of teaching and learning
- refine arrangements for children with special dietary requirements so they have the same opportunities and experiences as their friends.

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 carried out a joint observation of an activity and evaluated this with the manager.
- The inspector discussed children's assessment and the planning. She looked at a range of documents, including the safeguarding procedure.
- The inspector held a meeting with the manager and head office representatives. She discussed the nursery's self-evaluation and checked evidence of staff working within the nursery.
- The inspector spoke to parents during the inspection and took account of their views and other written feedback. The inspector spoke to staff and children at an appropriate time.

Inspector

Rebecca Williams

Inspection findings

Effectiveness of the leadership and management is good

Staff implement the policies and procedures to minimise risk to children's welfare effectively. Staff are carefully vetted and checked for their continuing suitability to work with children. Staff and managers are aware of their roles and responsibilities in safeguarding children, including the procedures to follow if they have concerns about a child's welfare. The arrangements for safeguarding are effective. The management team gathers feedback and identifies areas that need to be developed effectively. They include staff in their plans to help build a culture of striving for continuous improvement. Staff have benefitted from recent training and visits to other nurseries. They have made effective use of this learning to carefully develop the environment to support and encourage children's play. In addition, the management team has shared the knowledge they have gained from training with parents to help them support their child's learning at home.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment is good

The well-qualified staff have a good understanding of how to help children to learn through play. Staff know the children well and track their progress carefully. They are clear about children's starting points and use children's interests to help develop their learning and skills. Managers monitor and review children's progress regularly to identify those that need additional help or more challenge. Children enjoy using their senses to explore a tray of ice. They experiment with food colouring and tools. Staff follow children's interests as children discuss snowmen. Staff understand how to extend activities and model different ways to scoop up or break the ice. They talk about size and position, helping to promote children's mathematical skills.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare are good

Staff ensure children benefit from regular outdoor play and encourage them to think about how to stay healthy. For example, children talk about their favourite healthy foods as they learn to peel and cut vegetables in the role-play area. They are taught to use real tools safely. Staff use meaningful praise to support their attempts as they encourage children to keep trying. Children develop a good attitude to learning. Children are confident and eagerly explore the welcoming environment. Following feedback from parents, managers changed how children's completed artwork is displayed. This helps children to feel proud of their work and encourages them to share it with their parents. Staff ensure children learn about other cultures through a variety of experiences. For example, they taste foods from different countries and learn about a range of festivals.

Outcomes for children are good

All children make good progress over time from their starting points, including those who have (SEN) and/or disabilities. Children who speak English as an additional language are supported well and are developing their spoken English. Children concentrate carefully as they thread pasta onto string. Younger children develop finger control as they pinch and drag string through a tray of paint. These are some of the ways children gain the skills that they will need for school or the next stage of their learning.

Setting details

Unique reference number	EY460413
Local authority	Hertfordshire
Inspection number	1083536
Type of provision	Full-time provision
Day care type	Childcare - Non-Domestic
Registers	Early Years Register
Age range of children	0 - 4
Total number of places	75
Number of children on roll	73
Name of registered person	Sycamore House Day Nursery Limited
Registered person unique reference number	RP903458
Date of previous inspection	18 January 2017
Telephone number	01279465097

Sycamore House Day Nursery registered in 2013. The nursery employs 30 members of childcare staff. Of these, 18 hold appropriate early years qualifications at level 3 or above, including two members of staff that hold qualifications at level 7. The nursery opens from Monday to Friday, 51 weeks of the year, they are closed for a week at Christmas. Sessions are from 7am until 7pm. The nursery provides funded early education for two-, three- and four-year-old children.

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