

Inspection of Sunbeams Preschool and Nursery

59 Canterbury Way, Stevenage, Hertfordshire SG1 4LJ

Inspection date: 5 February 2020

Overall effectiveness	Good
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The quality of education	Good
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Behaviour and attitudes	Good
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Personal development	Good
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Leadership and management	Good
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Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Outstanding
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What is it like to attend this early years setting?

The provision is good

Children arrive happy and keen to start their day at the pre-school. They form very good relationships with staff, who ensure that their well-being, safety and individual needs are well met. Children make friends and enjoy playing together. They are encouraged to use good manners and treat one another with respect. For example, they learn to take turns, share toys and listen to each other's views.

Children are offered a wealth of interesting activities and experiences, which they are free to explore and investigate. They use their imagination well in the role-play areas. They have fun dressing up in clothes from many different countries. Children enjoy creating their own stories. They are often about princesses who live in beautiful castles. Staff extend their learning by helping them to design a castle with used materials.

Children's language skills are very well promoted. They learn new words as they play, and staff ask them questions to encourage their speech. They develop a love of books and listen carefully to stories. Children look forward to their weekly French lessons. They have a lot of fun and take pleasure in their learning. Children quickly gain the skills they need for their future learning and for school.

What does the early years setting do well and what does it need to do better?

- The pre-school is well established in the community. The new manager and staff create a welcoming atmosphere. They are dedicated and enthusiastic, which has a positive impact on the quality of the provision. The senior management team carefully monitors the workload and well-being of the staff.
- Staff know the children well and have high expectations about what they can achieve. They monitor children's individual progress to identify any gaps in their learning. Staff use their knowledge of children's abilities and interests to plan a wide range of activities and high-quality learning opportunities.
- Parents are very complimentary about the pre-school provision. They say they are kept well informed of their children's achievements. They are supported to continue their children's learning at home. Staff provide 'activity bags' with suggestions of home activities. This contributes to the good progress children make.
- Children take part in 'busy-fingers' activities every day to develop their small-muscle skills. They use tweezers to pick up small items, and skilfully thread pipe cleaners into colanders. They enjoy making play dough. They confidently use tools and their hands to roll, pat and mould it into different shapes.
- Children have fun working in small groups, developing their concentration and listening skills. They have many opportunities to practise their early writing skills. When they are ready, staff support children in learning letter names and sounds.

This helps to develop their early literacy skills.

- The outdoor environment has been extremely well developed to include all areas of learning. The many interesting and challenging activities help to support children who learn best outside. They enjoy practising their balance and coordination as they explore the equipment. They roll down hills and splash in puddles. All children love to make 'potions' in the sensory tray and 'soup' in the mud kitchen.
- The manager carefully monitors children's progress. Children with special educational needs and/or disabilities are quickly identified and supported. Staff attend specific training and work closely with parents and outside agencies to promote children's learning and development.
- Children learn about the importance of healthy lifestyles. They closely follow the visual instructions of how to blow their noses safely. This includes putting their tissues in the bin and using hand gel to help prevent the spread of infection.
- Parents provide staff with relevant information about their children's care needs when their children start attending. However, staff do not use the information about children's existing skills and abilities effectively to inform planning from the start.
- The management team has targeted plans to improve the quality of the provision. However, they have not fully explored ways to continually build on the professional development opportunities for staff in order to enhance their good knowledge and skills.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Staff are clear about their responsibility to protect children. They know what to do should they have any concerns about a child's welfare. The senior management team carries out rigorous vetting and induction procedures to ensure that staff are suitable to work with children. The pre-school premises are well maintained, and good attention is given to children's safety and security. Staff talk to children about the importance of keeping themselves safe. Children are allowed to take manageable risks in their play, such as climbing and balancing safely. Staff supervise children very well inside and outside.

What does the setting need to do to improve?

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

- use the information from parents about children's level of development more effectively when they first join the pre-school, so that specific next steps can be planned from the start
- provide opportunities for staff to continually build on their good knowledge and skills.

Setting details

Unique reference number	EY243400
Local authority	Hertfordshire
Inspection number	10127388
Type of provision	Childcare on non-domestic premises
Registers	Early Years Register
Day care type	Sessional day care
Age range of children	2 to 4
Total number of places	26
Number of children on roll	39
Name of registered person	Taylor, Katherine
Registered person unique reference number	RP511297
Telephone number	07814 041457
Date of previous inspection	27 April 2016

Information about this early years setting

Sunbeams Preschool and Nursery registered in 2002. The pre-school employs six members of childcare staff. Of these, five hold appropriate early years qualifications at level 2 or above. The pre-school opens from Monday to Friday during term time only. Sessions are from 9.15am until 3.30pm. The pre-school provides funded early education for two-, three- and four-year-old children.

Information about this inspection

Inspector

Jacqui Oliver

Inspection activities

- The inspector and the manager completed a tour of all areas of the pre-school to gain an understanding of how the provision and the curriculum are organised.
- A joint observation was carried out by the inspector and the pre-school manager.
- The inspector spoke to staff, parents and children at appropriate times during the inspection, and took account of their views.
- The inspector held a meeting with the pre-school manager. She looked at a sample of the pre-school's documentation, including staff's qualifications, safeguarding policies and procedures, and suitability checks of staff working in the pre-school.

We carried out this inspection 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.

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