

Inspection of Sunhill Montessori Nursery

Sunhill Montessori Nursery, Grantham Close, Royston SG8 5WY

Inspection date: 16 November 2021

Overall effectiveness **Good**

The quality of education **Good**

Behaviour and attitudes **Good**

Personal development **Good**

Leadership and management **Good**

Overall effectiveness at previous
inspection Good

What is it like to attend this early years setting?

The provision is good

Children enjoy their time in the nursery and with staff who genuinely enjoy their work. When young children are settling in, staff give them extra comfort and reassurance. They enjoy knowing that staff are close by as they develop the confidence to explore. There is a lovely atmosphere in the rooms, as staff spontaneously and frequently sing songs to children and read them favourite stories. This supports their communication and language skills. Children hear their home language during play and activities. For example, some staff have learned and use familiar phrases in songs, and greetings, in different languages.

Children show that they are fond of the staff and children in their room. For example, they know all their names and the older children build close friendships with peers. Younger children recognise their siblings over the low garden fence and proudly smile as they approach them.

Children behave well. They are encouraged to use and develop their imagination as they bring their ideas to life. For example, when children say they want to go on an 'adventure across the bridge and through a swamp to nanny's house', staff facilitate this outside. They praise children for giving such good descriptive instructions about how to get there. Staff extend children's learning as they encourage them to guess how long it will take and ask how they may recreate a swamp with planks and tyres.

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

- Children benefit from a broad and balanced curriculum, in the main. The manager and staff are clear about the developing skills and knowledge that they want children to learn in each room. For example, younger children learn to scrape their plates after they have eaten, while the oldest children wash up their own crockery and utensils after each meal.
- Key persons know their key children very well. They are confident about what the children could do when they started at the nursery and how they have helped them to make good progress and develop the skills they need for the next stage in their learning.
- All staff interact well with children. Staff watch, listen and respond to children. They model learning to encourage children to have a go. For example, a child learns that he can copy a square and triangle shape firstly drawn by a member of staff. Younger children learn to make circular marks in the green sand and older children 'paint' the walls outside with different coloured water. These activities help children of all ages to develop early literacy skills and the small muscles in their hands.
- Staff follow clear hygiene practices as they carry out care routines. This

promotes the welfare of each child they care for. Children are provided with healthy and nutritious meals and snacks. However, the organisation of snack times in some rooms does not promote the ethos of the nursery that is based on self-directed activity. Some children do not wish to stop for snack but want to carry on with a self-chosen activity, and snack time prevents this. Some children spend a period of time that is not meaningful, rolling around on the carpet while they wait to wash their hands.

- Staff plan activities for both the indoor and outdoor environment and children benefit from lots of fresh air each day, which supports their good health. However, outdoor areas lack learning opportunities for children to explore the natural world.
- The staff team is strong and determined to provide children with good quality early years experiences. The manager is proactive in ensuring that the ratios of adults to children remain correct and that a sufficient amount of qualified, suitable staff work directly with the children.
- The premises is secure which ensures that the children inside remain safe. Staff complete daily risk assessments for each of their rooms and outside areas. These are effective in identifying and minimising any risks to children.
- Partnerships with parents are strong. Recent feedback from parents is very favourable. They say that the nursery is a great place and they would recommend it. Others comment that they are impressed with the range of activities that their children are involved in.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

The staff and manager have a secure knowledge of safeguarding policies and procedures. They know what to do if there are concerns about children's well-being or if there is an allegation made against a member of staff. Staff benefit from regular training relating to safeguarding procedures as well as wider safeguarding issues. The manager and senior managers ensure that staff always have safeguarding at the forefront of everything they do. They use lots of successful initiatives to test and refresh staff's knowledge of safeguarding.

What does the setting need to do to improve?

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

- provide children with richer opportunities to learn about the natural world in the outside areas
- provide all children with more meaningful learning and engagement opportunities during daily routines, such as snack time.

Setting details

Unique reference number	EY463845
Local authority	Hertfordshire
Inspection number	10214164
Type of provision	Childcare on non-domestic premises
Registers	Early Years Register, Compulsory Childcare Register, Voluntary Childcare Register
Day care type	Full day care
Age range of children at time of inspection	0 to 5
Total number of places	87
Number of children on roll	101
Name of registered person	Sunhill Daycare (Europe) Limited
Registered person unique reference number	RP519019
Telephone number	01763 226 030
Date of previous inspection	11 January 2018

Information about this early years setting

Sunhill Montessori Nursery registered in 2013. The nursery provider employs 23 members of childcare staff. Of these, 14 hold appropriate early years qualifications at level 2 or above. The nursery is open Monday to Friday all year around and operates from 7.30am until 6.30pm. The nursery staff provide funded early education for two-, three- and four-year-old children. A holiday club is provided for children up to eight years of age during school holidays.

Information about this inspection

Inspector

Anna Davies

Inspection activities

- This was the first routine inspection the provider received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. The inspector discussed the impact of the pandemic with the provider and has taken that into account in their evaluation of the provision.
- The manager and inspector completed a learning walk together and discussed how the curriculum is organised.
- 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 at appropriate times throughout the inspection.
- Children spoke to the inspector about the activities they were doing.
- The inspector carried out a joint observation with the nursery manager.
- The inspector held a meeting with the nursery manager and a senior manager. She looked at relevant documentation and reviewed evidence of the suitability of staff working in the nursery.
- The inspector viewed written feedback from parents and the inspector took account of this.

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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