

Inspection of Sycamore House Day Nursery

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

Inspection date: 3 February 2022

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	Good
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What is it like to attend this early years setting?

The provision is good

During the pandemic lockdowns and in line with guidance, children were dropped at the front or side door as part of keeping everyone safe. Parents have now begun taking their children into the nursery, dropping off and collecting them from their base room. Children show great pleasure as they greet their friends on arrival, while babies reach their arms out and are rewarded with genuinely caring hugs from staff. Pre-school children recognise shapes, colours and numbers. They confidently identify bigger or smaller items and use mathematical language in their play.

All children are confident and move around their rooms selecting the toys they want to play with. They settle quickly and busy themselves as they build tracks and bridges, cook pretend meals in the play kitchen or explore books with each other and staff. Outside, children's imagination and communication skills shine as they become 'swashbuckling pirates, in search of treasure'. They safely climb and balance on the equipment, managing movement with care. Behaviour is good. Children demonstrate kind hands. They learn to share and take turns, using sand timers. This helps them to learn about taking responsibility and applying rules.

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

- Members of the management team strive for improvement. They provide plenty of support for staff to protect their well-being. Everyone understands their role and any additional responsibilities. Staff have attended training to support them in understanding how to ignite children's curiosity in learning.
- Staff find out information about the children, from their parents, when they first start at the nursery. Each family has a key person, who continues to build interactive relationships. All adults involved share information to support children's overall learning and development.
- Necessary steps are taken to keep children safe while playing inside and in the garden. The security of the nursery is taken seriously, and visitors are checked before entry. Children are adequately supervised, particularly when moving between the inside and outside environments. Risk assessments and daily checks are in place and adhered to. This helps to ensure that staff are fully aware of and take action to minimise potential risks to children.
- Parents speak highly of the nursery staff. They are aware of the ongoing progress their children are making. Staff share children's next steps with parents via electronic communications systems. These include photographs of what their children are doing while at the nursery. Parents comment that 'staff are very supportive', and they provide extra support when children need this. Parents conclude that their children acquire a 'stunning vocabulary'.
- Babies and toddlers enjoy multi-sensory activities that are helping them to make

sense of the world around them. Communication throughout the nursery is given high priority. Additional support is sought for children with special educational needs and/or disabilities and those who speak English as an additional language.

- Staff promote children's independence well. Toddlers demonstrate good hand-to-eye coordination as they learn to feed themselves, while older children serve meals and pour their own drinks. All children learn to put on and take off their coats and shoes from an early age, helping to embed necessary skills in readiness for school. Children make good progress over time.
- Children are beginning to learn about the wider world. They enjoy opportunities to learn from staff whose cultures and customs are different from their own. However, opportunities enabling children to explore cultural differences between themselves are not currently as well supported, to help them understand and celebrate the diversity between them.
- Most staff have a good understanding of how young children's learning is frequently motivated by their interests. They also understand and keep plans flexible to meet children's changing interests. However, there is scope, especially as a new staff team, to plan more in-depth learning for children, providing opportunities that enable them to recall, make connections and utilise what they know.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

The management team and staff have a good understanding of their responsibilities to safeguard children. They are confident about the procedures to follow should they have concerns about any of the children in their care. Regular training and staff meetings help to keep their knowledge up to date. Staff understand what action to take if they are worried about the behaviour of a colleague. The management team follows robust recruitment procedures when appointing new staff to help ensure that they are suitable to work with children. Ongoing checks are made to ensure the continued suitability of the staff team.

What does the setting need to do to improve?

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

- increase opportunities for children to learn and celebrate the similarities and differences between themselves
- develop teaching practice further to ensure that staff are confident to arrange learning opportunities logically, to consistently support children to recall, make connections and utilise what they know.

Setting details

Unique reference number	EY460413
Local authority	Hertfordshire
Inspection number	10221179
Type of provision	Childcare on non-domestic premises
Registers	Early Years Register
Day care type	Full day care
Age range of children at time of inspection	0 to 4
Total number of places	72
Number of children on roll	103
Name of registered person	Sycamore House Day Nursery Limited
Registered person unique reference number	RP903458
Telephone number	01279465097
Date of previous inspection	18 December 2017

Information about this early years setting

Sycamore House Day Nursery registered in 2013 and is situated in Bishop's Stortford, Hertfordshire. The nursery employs 29 members of childcare staff. Of these, 18 hold appropriate early years qualifications at level 2, level 3 and level 4. The nursery opens from Monday to Friday all year round, except for a week at Christmas. Sessions are from 7.30am to 6.30pm. The nursery provides funded early education for two-, three- and four-year-old children.

Information about this inspection

Inspector

Lynn Clements

Inspection activities

- This was the first routine inspection the setting received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. The inspector discussed the impact of the pandemic with the manager and the provider, and this has been taken into account in their evaluation of the nursery.
- The manager and the inspector completed a learning walk of the nursery.
- The inspector carried out a joint observation of an activity with the manager and together they evaluated this.
- Children spoke to the inspector about what they enjoy doing in the nursery.
- Staff spoke with the inspector at appropriate times during the inspection. Parents provided written feedback.
- The inspector reviewed relevant documentation, including the suitability checks of all adults working in the setting.

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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