

Unicorn Day Nursery

Shelsey Avenue, WHITEHEATH, Oldbury, B69 1BP

Inspection date	04/04/2014
Previous inspection date	31/01/2014

The quality and standards of the early years provision	This inspection:	
	Previous inspection:	
How well the early years provision meets the needs of the range of children who attend		2
The contribution of the early years provision to the well-being of children		2
The effectiveness of the leadership and management of the early years provision		2

The quality and standards of the early years provision

This provision is good

- Children are confident and enthusiastic learners, who make good progress in all areas. This is because the teaching provided by staff is stimulating and fun, motivating them to engage in the range of experiences available.
- Children develop good attachments to the staff who care for them. This enables them to confidently explore the environment as their emotional well-being is very well supported.
- Children's safety is effectively promoted through the implementation of thorough safeguarding and welfare procedures.
- Effective partnerships between parents and staff are well established. This ensures that each child's care and learning needs are well met throughout their time in the setting.

It is not yet outstanding because

- There is scope to further extend children's thinking skills through the continuous provision of open-ended resources outdoors.
- There is scope to enhance the already good reflective practice to include peer-on-peer observations to enhance and extend the existing good standard of teaching.

Information about this inspection

Inspections of registered early years provision are:

- scheduled at least once in every inspection cycle – the current cycle ends on 31 July 2016
- scheduled more frequently where Ofsted identifies a need to do so, for example where provision was previously judged inadequate
- brought forward in the inspection cycle where Ofsted has received information that suggests the provision may not be meeting the legal requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage or where assessment of the provision identifies a need for early inspection
- prioritised where we have received information that the provision is not meeting the requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage and which suggests children may not be safe
- scheduled at the completion of an investigation into failure to comply with the requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage.

The provision is also registered on the voluntary and compulsory parts of the Childcare Register. This report includes a judgment about compliance with the requirements of that register.

Inspection activities

- The inspector observed activities in the three playrooms and the outside learning environment.
- The inspector conducted a joint observation of a circle time session with the manager and owner.
- The inspector held meetings with the manager of the provision and spoke to the children and staff at appropriate times throughout the inspection.
- The inspector looked at children's assessment records and planning documentation.
- The inspector looked at a range of documentation, including health and safety policies and procedures, staffing rotas, accident records and risk assessments.
- The inspector checked evidence of the suitability and qualifications of the practitioners working with the children, the provider's self-evaluation form and improvement plan.
- The inspector took account of the views of parents and carers from information included in the setting's own parent survey.

Inspector

Sharon Lea

Full report

Information about the setting

Unicorn Day Nursery was registered in 2009 and is on the Early Years Register and the compulsory and voluntary parts of the Childcare Register. It is situated in converted clinic premises adjacent to St James Primary School in Oldbury, West Midlands. The setting is privately owned and managed and serves the local area. The nursery is all on one level with easy access and has enclosed play areas available for outdoor play. The setting employs 16 members of childcare staff. Of these, 11 hold appropriate early years qualifications at levels 2 and 3. In addition, two members of staff hold qualifications at levels 5 and 6 and one holds Qualified Teacher Status. The setting opens Monday to Friday, from 7.30am until 6pm. Children attend for a variety of sessions. There are currently 92 children attending; 78 of whom are in the early years age group. The setting provides funded early education for two-, three- and four-year-old children. It supports a number of children who speak English as an additional language.

What the setting needs to do to improve further

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

- provide children with opportunities to use open-ended resources in the outdoor area at all times, supporting their developing thinking skills
- extend the programme of peer observations to enable staff to review and reflect on the quality of their own and others' teaching, to enhance and extend the existing good standard of teaching.

Inspection judgements

How well the early years provision meets the needs of the range of children who attend

Children make very good progress in all areas of their learning and development. This is because the staff carry out regular observations of the children during play to assess their skills and identify their current interests. They then use this information to plan a wide range of activities and opportunities which support the children's identified next steps in learning. Planning is implemented each week, responding to the current interests and learning needs of each individual child. Children have opportunities to develop their own ideas and interests through the resources available through the continuous provision and activities led by adults, aimed at developing further knowledge and skills. This ensures that children have a good balance of child-initiated experiences and adult-led opportunities. Staff are skilful at identifying when to leave children to become deeply absorbed in their play or when it is appropriate to intervene, in order to develop their learning further. For example, babies explore the sand independently, until staff identify that they would benefit from being shown how to use the spade to fill the bucket and

what happens to the sand when it is poured into a sieve. Toddlers enjoy building towers with wooden blocks and laughing when these wobble and fall over. Before they lose interest with this and move onto another activity, staff extend their learning by encouraging the children to count the number of blocks as they build their tower and talk about the different shapes of the blocks. Older children enjoy opportunities to come together as a group where they learn about the day, date, month, weather and seasons. As the children do this every day, they become very confident in their knowledge and staff enhance this through challenging children to identify today's date through asking them what number is one more than the date yesterday. In addition, the children develop excellent skills in sitting appropriately while in a group and how to put up their hands when they know the answer to the questions posed by staff. On the whole, teaching is good and some elements, particularly in the pre-school room are outstanding. This is because staff know how to engage with the children and foster high levels of motivation through their enthusiasm. Consequently, children make good progress in their learning, which enables them to be well prepared for the next stage of their lives and in preparation for school.

Children make very good progress in their communication, language and literacy skills, enabling them to become confident communicators. Babies and children of all ages enjoy sharing picture books and stories with staff and engage happily with songs and action rhymes, copying the actions led by staff and requesting favourite songs. For example, babies enjoy songs, such as 'head, shoulders, knees and toes' and the encouragement by staff to find their different body parts. Older children enjoy stories and predicting what will happen next. Staff model language well, speaking clearly and repeating words to support younger children in their language development. Older children are continually engaged in conversation by staff who listen to their responses and ask open-ended questions to further their thinking. Children whose first language is not English are well supported through staff gaining key words from parents in their home language and the use of visual timetables, enabling them to express their needs. The setting is a print-rich environment where resources and displays are labelled with pictures and print. Older children are taught early phonics in order to be able to recognise and say letter sounds, and clapping the number of syllables in their names, assisting them to develop their early reading skills. Opportunities for early writing are available in all rooms and outdoors. Older children have a dedicated literacy area, in addition to opportunities to write in the role-play area. These opportunities support children's developing literacy skills well, in readiness for the next stage in their learning, such as school. However, there is scope to further develop children's thinking skills when outdoors, through the continual provision of open-ended resources for them to create imaginative structures.

Effective partnerships between parents and staff are well established and given a high priority by staff. This is because staff understand the importance of developing positive relationships in order to promote consistency of support with regards to children's care, learning and development. Parents share detailed information on entry to the setting about their child's personality, skills and development with their child's key person. This enables the needs of the child to be met from the outset and provides a more accurate assessment of children's starting points regarding their development. Parents are actively encouraged to review their child's learning journals at any time and to contribute observations about their child's learning at home. Summaries of each child's learning and

development are shared regularly with parents and the required progress checks at age two are in place to complete with parents at the appropriate time. This ensures that children's needs are continually assessed and planned for and that children who require additional support receive this at the earliest opportunity. Learning links between home and the setting are promoted well through the loaning of story sacks and books which can be shared at home. These opportunities support parents in developing communication and language skills with their children and shared reading, in readiness for the transition to school.

The contribution of the early years provision to the well-being of children

Children are very settled and extremely happy in this welcoming setting. They develop good relationships with one another and the staff, who are caring and take time to get to know each child and their unique needs. This is supported through the well-established key person system in place and the flexible settling-in sessions, where parents slowly build up the time their children spend at the nursery. Parents comment that their children settle quickly and are happy to attend, which results in them being confident to leave their child in the care of the staff. Parents share information with staff about their child's care needs, interests and achievements on entry to the setting. This enables staff to appropriately support the child's needs and provide for their interests from the outset. As a result, children have strong and secure emotional attachments with the staff. This enables them to confidently explore the environment, enjoy their time in the setting and make good progress in all areas of their development and learning. Similarly, transitions between rooms within the setting are equally well supported, in partnership with parents and the new key person. This ensures that children's needs are consistently promoted and well supported. Older children are fully prepared for their transition into the school environment because nursery staff ensure that they are confident and fully prepared intellectually, socially and emotionally. Staff arrange for these children to visit their school, so that they are aware of where they will be moving on to. This transition is further supported through the sharing of information relevant to each child regarding their progress and individual personalities and needs. As a result, children make the move on to full-time education more easily because of the positive steps taken to ease their transition.

Toddlers and older children develop their independence in self-help skills extremely well. This is because staff know the children exceedingly well and recognise when they are ready to take responsibility, such as managing their own toileting and hygiene needs or putting on their own coats for outdoor play. Toddlers and older children are encouraged to serve their own meals and pour their own drinks. They do this very competently because staff provide serving implements which are an appropriate size, enabling them to achieve this and develop their self-confidence. An understanding of the importance of hygiene is fostered from an early age, through staff ensuring that children wash their hands after using the bathroom, before meals and after outdoor or messy play. It is evident that because children have daily opportunities to manage these skills for themselves, they learn to do these competently, enhancing their sense of achievement. Therefore, they develop valuable skills which will benefit them throughout life. Children of all ages benefit from interesting and enabling learning environments indoors and outdoors. High quality toys and equipment are in good order and are freely accessible to all children, enabling

them to make choices about what they would like to play with. Each of the three age ranges have spacious, well-organised facilities, enabling babies, toddlers and young children to move around freely and to experience different opportunities. For example, toddlers and older children have separate rooms where messy play, such as painting, sand, water and gluing are available at all times. All rooms and outdoors have quiet, cosy spaces which enable children to look at books, have a rest and develop their communication skills with one another. Displays celebrate children's creativity and the many photographs in their learning journals showing them engaged in activities, celebrate the skills they have used and the learning gained from these experiences. Positive images of children and adults of different ages, abilities and from a range of cultures supports children's understanding of diversity well and promotes inclusion in this multicultural setting. Positive behaviour is highly evident and children happily play together as staff are good role models who provide a calm and caring environment. Children are encouraged to be kind to one another, share and take turns and respect one another through good listening. Older children are encouraged to behave positively through the 'can you be a super star?' system in place. This enables them to reflect on any warnings about their behaviour, through their name moving from the sunshine to the rainbow, with the aim that it will not need to reach the rain cloud. Children are therefore supported to reflect on their behaviour and have the opportunity to self-regulate this, resulting in them making positive decisions and choices about themselves. This results in children being polite and respectful, and confident to communicate their ideas with others. These personal skills in managing their emotions and developing positive relationships support children extremely well towards the next stage of their learning, such as school.

Children of all ages enjoy daily fresh air and exercise, developing physical skills and confidence as they enthusiastically play in the well-equipped outdoor area in all weathers. The provision of waterproof suits and wellington boots ensures that children can benefit from plenty of fresh air and exercise throughout the year, in all weathers. There are separate areas for babies, toddlers and older children, enabling the provision of resources to meet their different levels of physical skills and promote their safety. Staff supervise children in using a wide range of resources, such as balancing beams, slides and wheeled toys. Children and staff enjoy playing hide and seek together, developing the counting skills of those who are the seeker and providing lots of fun through the inventive places which children find to hide in. They all join in enthusiastically and when staff suggest a new activity, such as an egg and spoon race, they are all keen to take part in this new challenge. Outdoors, children learn how to take risks safely as staff encourage them to challenge themselves on the large equipment. Opportunities for planting, exploring the mud kitchen and searching for insects, support children's developing understanding of the world around them. Physical exercise is also extremely well promoted indoors, as children participate in twice-daily music and movement sessions. These are thoroughly enjoyed by even the youngest children, who participate enthusiastically and skilfully. In addition, a qualified dance teacher provides weekly dance lessons for those who wish to participate. Snacks and meals provided by the nursery chef are well balanced and nutritious and all dietary needs are very well catered for. Hygiene standards are highly maintained and the kitchen has achieved a five star rating from the environmental health agency, the maximum achievable. Meal times are social occasions for babies and children, who are encouraged to feed themselves independently, as soon as they are able. Because the children self-serve their meals, this enables them to have portions according to their

appetites and individual preferences, and also supports them to try other foods which they may not have tasted before. Topics and discussions on healthy eating, support children's developing understanding of healthy choices. Staff also extend older children's understanding of where different foods grow. For example, they discuss fruits that grow on trees and foods, such as potatoes and carrots that grow underground. Snacks are provided mid-morning and mid-afternoon which means that children are well nourished, maintaining their energy levels throughout the day. Drinking water is available for all children at all times, ensuring that they are well hydrated.

The effectiveness of the leadership and management of the early years provision

The management team have a good understanding of their roles and responsibilities in ensuring that the setting meets the requirements of the Statutory framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage. A wide range of policies and procedures, risk assessments and safety measures are all in place, implemented by staff and monitored by management. These are reviewed annually or when it is identified that amendments or additions need to be made. Detailed accident and medication records are maintained and signed by parents, keeping them informed at all times. Information from accident records is used to further assess potential risks, review existing risk assessments and to inform staff practice. Management fully understand their obligation to contact Ofsted if any notifiable incidents should occur. Staff carry out daily risk assessments, indoors and outdoors, helping to ensure that the environment is free from hazards and that resources and equipment are safe for the age range of children using these. Due to the layout of the building, management ensure that staffing ratios exceed the statutory requirements as far as possible, to ensure that children are appropriately supervised in all of the individual rooms in the setting. A closed-circuit television system is also in place, enabling management to monitor all areas of the setting. Staffs' knowledge of the safeguarding procedures is strong and they have a clear understanding of their role and duty to report any concerns they may have about children or their colleagues. The written safeguarding policy contains detailed information of the procedures to follow should any concerns about a child be identified, and information is evident in every room to support staff in making a referral to the appropriate agencies. Policies and procedures are shared with parents when first joining the setting and again when these are updated or new policies are implemented. Thorough recruitment procedures are in place to ensure that new staff are suitably qualified and vetted. On appointment, a detailed induction process is carried out, supporting new staff to settle into the setting and enabling them to fully understand their roles and responsibilities. All of these measures in place, ensure that effective steps are taken to minimise risks and to keep children safe, healthy and secure.

Staff benefit from established supervision and appraisal processes which are used to identify support, highlight training and meet their development needs. There is scope, however, to support staff development further, through the introduction of peer observations, to enable staff to review and reflect on the quality of their own and others' teaching. Staff receive mandatory training in safeguarding and first aid and attend additional courses provided by the local authority, when these are available. It is evident that staff training has a very positive impact upon the setting, as staff demonstrate how

they have put ideas they have gained, into practice. For example, developing communication opportunities in the baby room through introducing a story of the week initiative and focusing on developing key words, following attendance on a speech and language course. The nursery benefits from the manager having Qualified Teacher Status, positively influencing the standard of teaching and care within the setting. Evaluation of the setting's strengths and areas for development is ongoing and involves contributions from staff, parents and children. Parents can share their opinions verbally at any time and through annual questionnaires. The setting has ongoing improvement plans and staff work well together to achieve identified developments, such as developing mathematics and literacy opportunities throughout the setting. This demonstrates the aspirations of the staff team to continuously improve the quality of the provision. Systems are in place to monitor children's progress through their learning journals and a local authority speech and language screening system. This means that management are able to identify those who are making good progress and that any gaps in learning can be addressed swiftly. The management team are highly involved within the childcare rooms, engaging in play with the children, modelling good practice to the staff and ensuring that the environment and the planning in place are supporting the children to make the best possible progress in their learning and development.

Effective partnerships between parents and staff are well established. This ensures that each child's care and learning needs are well met throughout their time in the setting. Parents report that they are happy with the standard of care that their children receive. They share that they can identify the benefits of their children attending the setting, due to the progress they are making in their learning and development. Daily written and verbal information is shared with the parents of babies and toddlers. In the older children's room, verbal information is shared each day. This ensures that a two-way flow of information is encouraged between parents and staff on a daily basis, keeping everyone informed and up to date about the children's needs. Parents receive regular newsletters, a range of information through notice boards, have access to a website and receive frequent updates on their children's progress. Parents are also encouraged to participate in the life of the setting through attending regular parent workshops, such as cooking or seasonal crafts sessions. In addition, the setting is in the heart of the community and encourages parents and children to be involved in local events which bring together the setting, church, library and school which are all located nearby. Effective partnerships with external agencies and local schools are also well established and contribute securely to meeting children's needs. Staff work well with the area inclusion service, to support children who have additional learning or development needs. Teachers are invited to meet those children who will shortly be transferring to school, enabling information to be shared about individual children's personalities and needs. In addition, the setting welcomes and values the support received from local authority officers, to support their continual progress and development.

The Childcare Register

The requirements for the compulsory part of the Childcare Register are **Met**

The requirements for the voluntary part of the Childcare Register are **Met**

What inspection judgements mean

Registered early years provision

Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	Outstanding provision is highly effective in meeting the needs of all children exceptionally well. This ensures that children are very well prepared for the next stage of their learning.
Grade 2	Good	Good provision is effective in delivering provision that meets the needs of all children well. This ensures children are ready for the next stage of their learning.
Grade 3	Requires improvement	The provision is not giving children a good standard of early years education and/or there are minor breaches of the safeguarding and welfare requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage. It will be monitored and inspected within twelve months of the date of this inspection.
Grade 4	Inadequate	Provision that is inadequate requires significant improvement and/or enforcement action. The provision is failing to give children an acceptable standard of early years education and/or is not meeting the safeguarding and welfare requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage. It will be monitored and inspected again within six months of the date of this inspection.
Met		The provision has no children on roll. The inspection judgement is that the provider continues to meet the requirements for registration.
Not met		The provision has no children on roll. The inspection judgement is that the provider does not meet the requirements for registration.

Inspection

This inspection was carried out by Ofsted 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.

Setting details

Unique reference number	EY386701
Local authority	Sandwell
Inspection number	956335
Type of provision	
Registration category	Childcare - Non-Domestic
Age range of children	0 - 17
Total number of places	50
Number of children on roll	92
Name of provider	Sandwell Supply Nursery Services Ltd
Date of previous inspection	31/01/2014
Telephone number	0121 552 5242

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Type of provision

For the purposes of this inspection the following definitions apply:

Full-time provision is that which operates for more than three hours. These are usually known as nurseries, nursery schools and pre-schools and must deliver the Early Years Foundation Stage. They are registered on the Early Years Register and pay the higher fee for registration.

Sessional provision operates for more than two hours but does not exceed three hours in any one day. These are usually known as pre-schools, kindergartens or nursery schools

and must deliver the Early Years Foundation Stage. They are registered on the Early Years Register and pay the lower fee for registration.

Childminders care for one or more children where individual children attend for a period of more than two hours in any one day. They operate from domestic premises, which are usually the childminder's own home. They are registered on the Early Years Register and must deliver the Early Years Foundation Stage.

Out of school provision may be sessional or full-time provision and is delivered before or after school and/or in the summer holidays. They are registered on the Early Years Register and must deliver the Early Years Foundation Stage. Where children receive their Early Years Foundation Stage in school these providers do not have to deliver the learning and development requirements in full but should complement the experiences children receive in school.

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