

University of Essex Day Nursery

University of Essex, Wivenhoe Park, COLCHESTER, CO4 3SQ

Inspection date	27/11/2012
Previous inspection date	22/11/2010

The quality and standards of the early years provision	This inspection:	2
	Previous inspection:	2
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

- The nursery provides a vibrant and stimulating environment and the staff offer an extremely inclusive and welcoming service for all children and their families.
- The educational programmes are effectively balanced to provide activities which promote all seven areas of learning. Children relish the opportunity to choose whether to play indoors or outside.
- An extensive range of cultural festivals and traditional events are celebrated with the children. Special events are also arranged with story tellers from around the world, joining children together to share their language and culture.
- Each child's key person plays a significant role in their care and learning. They are extremely knowledgeable about each child's specific needs and help children make progress and develop in their own unique and individual ways.
- Children are effectively protected because staff undertake thorough risk assessments each day, to ensure that any potential hazards are removed or made safe.

It is not yet outstanding because

- Opportunities to extend children's independence skills through everyday routines, such as meal times, are not yet fully embraced.
- Children are not achieving to their full potential as the nursery management are not currently monitoring closely enough, the effectiveness of the assessment and tracking processes.

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
- more frequently where Ofsted identifies a need to do so, for example where provision was previously judged as 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 for inspection 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
- 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 compulsory part 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 indoor and outdoor learning environments, and carried out a joint observation with the Early Years Professional.
- The inspector viewed a sample of the children's learning journals, planning documents and displays containing information about recent learning experiences.
- The inspector held discussions with the nursery management, staff team and the children.
- The inspector viewed evidence of suitability and qualifications of the staff team, risk assessment, policies and procedures and other documentation in relation to health and safety checks.
- The inspector took account of the views of parents spoken to on the day.

Inspector

Patricia Champion

Full Report

Information about the setting

The University of Essex Day Nursery was registered in 2010 on the Early Years Register and the compulsory part of the Childcare Register. It operates from 11 playrooms within a purpose-built facility located in the grounds of the University of Essex in Wivenhoe. All children share access to secure, enclosed, outdoor play areas. The nursery opens five days a week all year round. Operating times are from 8am until 6pm.

There are currently 207 children on roll, all of whom are within the early years age range. Children aged three and four-years-old receive funding for early education. Children attend for a variety of sessions or full daycare. The nursery serves the local community and wider areas. It supports a number of children who have special educational needs and/or disabilities or who have English as an additional language.

The nursery employs 48 staff, of whom 46 hold appropriate early years qualifications. One member of staff holds Early Years Professional Status and one member of staff holds Qualified Teacher Status. There are two staff currently working towards higher early years qualifications. The nursery also employs a finance and administration officer, two chefs and two domestic assistants. The nursery receives support from the local authority.

What the setting needs to do to improve further

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

- review the organisation of meal times to give children greater opportunities to pour their own drinks and serve their own food
- monitor more closely, the effectiveness of the assessment and tracking of children to ensure that it is more precise and sharply focused, to make certain that gaps are consistently narrowing for groups and individuals.

Inspection judgements

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

The staff are knowledgeable about the requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage and the characteristics of effective learning. They have high expectations for all children and make good use of educational programmes, which provide varied opportunities that successfully extend children's learning and development. Resources are easily accessible in all rooms and the outdoor areas, so that children can direct their own learning. Children play together in role play, developing lengthy narratives as they use their imagination well. They show high levels of perseverance and concentration throughout the sessions they attend.

The staff's interaction with the children is warm, caring and always positive. They are supportive yet unobtrusive, allowing children to work and play without dominating them. Staff respond sensitively to children's ideas and interests; they consider the things children talk about are worth knowing. This has a strong impact on children's confidence and self-esteem and their readiness for learning. The good quality of staff questioning helps children deepen their understanding and stimulates their curiosity. Babies and younger children are able to contribute to secure relationships with key persons who give them their full attention when they try to communicate. They are encouraged to use simple signing and gestures, to indicate their needs or emotions. The nursery is rich in language and literacy resources. Cosy places are provided where children enjoy and learn to appreciate books for pleasure and to gain information.

The staff recognise children's preferences and the different ways in which boys and girls learn. Children's interests, such as exploring superheroes, are extended well. For example, staff encourage children to count and use mark-making tools and scissors as they design costumes and props. The outdoor area is used extremely well to promote learning experiences, where children do the same things they do indoors, but with more freedom to use space and natural resources. A member of staff has a designated role to monitor and review the use of outdoor spaces for learning and consequently, there is now more value placed on experiences in the fresh air and in all weathers. Children become more knowledgeable about the changing seasons; they show delight in autumn leaves swirling in the wind and become fascinated when they see a rainbow. Staff also skilfully use these experiences to deliver ideas for creative tasks and developing children's understanding of the world.

Activities are based on the key person's understanding of children's starting points. They identify targets and how they can support children's next steps in learning. Well-presented learning journals are compiled, containing positive comments and photographs of children's achievements. The key persons are also starting to track development and collate information for the progress reports at age two, to determine whether children are making better or limited progress. However, this process is not yet consistently rigorous to ensure that no child gets left behind.

Staff work hard to help families appreciate that they are active partners in their children's education. Children's achievements are shared effectively through the individual learning journals; these help make children's learning more visible for parents and carers. Open days are held and the nursery operates an open door policy where parents can talk to key persons or management at any time. Parents also contribute to their children's experiences by coming into nursery to read stories, or by providing photographs of special

events or people who are important in their children's lives, for display and to include in the learning journals.

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

Babies and children are very happy and confident learners. They have a secure sense of belonging which enables them to enjoy their time and make very good progress. Effective settling-in procedures are in place to meet the individual needs of children, alongside a very successful key person system. There is always someone very familiar to the children, even at the start and end of each day. Information is gathered from parents right from the start to ensure that the key persons are fully aware of individual routines, interests and capabilities. Staff are very aware that changes of staff or moving to another room may temporarily affect confidence. Therefore, good attention has been given to the transition process as children move up into the next room and they are given many opportunities to get to know their new play environment and carers. Links with nearby schools are also well established and staff manage the transition to school effectively to support children at this crucial time.

Children develop their personal and social skills well. They seek out their friends to join in activities and play harmoniously and cooperatively. Children start to understand the importance of their own personal safety as they talk about what may happen if food is too hot to eat. When riding bicycles or running around the playground, expending energy as superheroes, they take great care not to bump into and hurt each other. Children are encouraged to be independent in most activities and develop a 'can do' or 'have a go' attitude when putting on boots and coats to go outside. However, more able children are not always encouraged to develop their independence skills by helping to serve their own food or pouring their own drinks during meal time routines.

Equality and inclusion underpin all aspects of care and learning. A wealth of displays of children's own artwork, visual aids and colourful posters, supports children's learning and their self-esteem. Children with English as an additional language have meaningful words, such as their names, displayed in their home language as well as in English. Positive images of diversity are used exceedingly well throughout the nursery and are based on seasonal and cultural festivals with superb resources, such as dual language books used within everyday play. These books are also available for children to share with their parents at home.

Children thrive because scrupulous attention is given to health and hygiene routines. Nappy changing is hygienically and sensitively undertaken in an area well away from the space used for play, sleep or eating. Young children learn from an early age to connect toileting routines with hand washing in order to reduce the risk of the spread of germs. Everyone removes their shoes on entry to the baby rooms so that the youngest children can play and develop their mobility on very clean flooring.

Meal times are calm, social occasions where babies and toddlers sit at low tables and chairs and confidently interact with staff and each other. Babies are sensitively cuddled as they are bottle fed in comfort. All meals are freshly cooked on the premises and the

nursery kitchen has been awarded five stars for food hygiene by an environmental health officer. Children have hearty appetites and make healthy choices at meal times. Staff are knowledgeable about any food allergies, and special dietary requirements are efficiently catered for. Children learn about the food that is good for them as they grow vegetables in the summer months on the allotment.

Children have good opportunities to develop their physical skills during both indoor and outside play. They show confidence as they take part in music and movement routines and recognise that they may become thirsty after energetic exercise. Younger children benefit from plenty of clear play space, enabling them to crawl and move freely, developing their physical control.

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

Children are cared for by a skilled, well-qualified and dedicated staff team. A strong emphasis is placed on safeguarding children and many staff have attended recent training so that they understand the procedures to follow if they have a concern about children's welfare. The premises are safe and secure, both indoors and outside and staff supervise children attentively. Each room has a telephone connected to the office for ease of communication. A detailed risk assessment and daily safety checks are carried out in all areas, to eliminate risks. All professionals visiting the nursery are requested to show their identification and their times of attendance are recorded. There are effective procedures for staff recruitment and induction, to ensure that adults working with children are suitable and understand their roles and responsibilities. Regular staff appraisals and ongoing training and support from the management, help all staff to improve their knowledge and practice and to effectively tackle any underperformance. Staff also attend regular meetings to evaluate their service and plan future activities and events.

The management team has a clear understanding of their responsibility to meet the learning and development requirements of the revised Early Years Foundation Stage. There is a strong commitment to improving the quality and standard of education and aspects of care, through continuous self-evaluation. The recommendation from the last inspection has been successfully addressed. The nursery has improved the organisation of the outdoor learning environment to provide more opportunities for children to initiate their own play and follow their own interests. Staff carefully plan and evaluate the activities each week to ensure that there is a clear focus on the children's learning priorities. Consequently, children are provided with a wide range of challenging activities and enjoyable experiences across all seven areas of learning. The assessment documents have recently been revised to strengthen the staff's capabilities when observing and tracking children's progress. However, there is not currently, precise and sharply focused monitoring of the observation and assessment process to ensure that individual children or groups of children, consistently achieve as much as they can.

Warm and friendly relationships exist between the parents and carers and the staff team. A wealth of high quality written information is displayed in the entrance and newsletters are regularly distributed to introduce parents to new staff members and to keep them

informed about forthcoming special events. Discussions with parents and carers show they appreciate and understand the nursery's approach to teaching and learning. They make complimentary comments about the efforts of the staff team and commend the ways in which they help to settle children and introduce them to new and exciting activities. Key persons and the special educational needs coordinator skilfully ensure, when necessary, that children get the support they need from outside agencies.

The Childcare Register

The requirements for the compulsory 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	Satisfactory	Satisfactory provision is performing less well than expectations in one or more of the key areas. It requires improvement in order to be good.
Grade 4	Inadequate	Provision that is inadequate requires significant improvement and/or enforcement. 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 inspected again within 12 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	EY414291
Local authority	Essex
Inspection number	890231
Type of provision	
Registration category	Childcare - Non-Domestic
Age range of children	0 - 8
Total number of places	121
Number of children on roll	207
Name of provider	University of Essex
Date of previous inspection	22/11/2010
Telephone number	01206 873224

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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 that are usually their 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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