

Seymour House Day Nursery School

Pear Trees, Seymour House, Chelmsford, CM1 7PP

Inspection date	02/07/2014
Previous inspection date	Not Applicable

The quality and standards of the early years provision	This inspection:	
	Previous inspection:	1 Not Applicable
How well the early years provision meets the needs of the range of children who attend		1
The contribution of the early years provision to the well-being of children		1
The effectiveness of the leadership and management of the early years provision		1

The quality and standards of the early years provision

This provision is outstanding

- Children are taught exceptionally well, by a dynamic team of practitioners who have an excellent knowledge of how children learn and develop, and who effectively support children's learning. As a result, children consistently make very good progress.
- Practitioners have a comprehensive knowledge of how to protect children's well-being. Children play in an exceptionally safe environment because of the precise monitoring of risk assessments, the completion of safeguarding training and a robust understanding of how to protect children's welfare.
- Children flourish as they play in the most stimulating, exciting and vibrant indoor and outdoor learning environments. Extensive, high quality resources effectively support children in their progress.
- Management and practitioners constantly strive for excellence. Children's views and parents' comments are actively sought and highly valued as part of the drive for improvement. This means action plans are extremely effective and successfully support children's achievements.
- Practitioners have established unquestionably professional relationships with parents and other early years settings caring for children. This means all children are confident, happy and superbly supported when moving from one room to another within the nursery, and when they leave to attend school.

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.

Inspection activities

- The inspector observed activities in all playrooms and the outdoor learning environment.
- The inspector took account of the views of parents spoken to on the day of the inspection, and engaged in discussions with the children and staff.
- The inspector looked at a sample of children's learning journey records, planning documentation and some written policy documents.
- The inspector held a meeting with the manager, and checked evidence of staff's suitability and qualifications.
- The inspector conducted a joint observation of children's activities with the manager.

Inspector

Lynn A Hartigan

Full report

Information about the setting

Seymour House Day Nursery School was established in 2000 and re-registered in 2014 under a limited company. It is on the Early Years Register. It is one of eight settings run and managed by Seymour House Limited. The nursery operates from a purpose built premises in Chelmsford, Essex. The nursery opens Monday to Friday, all year round. Opening times are from 7am until 6pm. Children attend for a variety of sessions. Children are cared for in three playrooms and have access to an enclosed area for outdoor play. There are currently 102 children attending who are within the early years age group. The nursery provides funded early education for three- and four-year-old children. It supports a number of children who speak English as an additional language and children with special educational needs and/or disabilities. There are currently 14 practitioners working directly with the children all have an appropriate early years qualification at level 3 or higher. There are two practitioners with Early Years Professional Status, one practitioner holds Qualified Teacher Status. The nursery also employs a cook and lunchtime assistants. It 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:

- inspire children's further understanding of caring for their natural environment, by extending the opportunities to learn about recycling and composting waste foods and packaging.

Inspection judgements

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

Children make extremely good progress in all aspects of the educational programme because teaching strategies delivered by practitioners are of consistently high quality. This has a positive impact on children developing the skills they need to be ready for school and their next stages in their learning. Children benefit from the expert knowledge of practitioners who have a clear understanding of how children learn. Every member of the team is passionate about their work and has very high expectations for all the children in their care. For example, babies and young children play and learn in superbly resourced, inspiring and welcoming environments, where they are offered many exciting challenges, as they explore and discover for themselves. Babies and very young children flourish in the cosy, but stimulating, baby room. Practitioners provide superb opportunities for sensory play experiences, such as the provision of quality natural play materials, treasure baskets and a variety of messy play activities. Babies are given space to move freely, furniture is designed for babies and toddlers in mind, and the organisation of resources means even the very youngest are able to make choices and select toys for themselves. Every child actively engages in purposeful play throughout the day, freely expressing their

ideas and interests. Practitioners expertly use this information to facilitate children's learning through careful and precise planning, to support each child's individual needs. Children are excited, busy and keen to learn. They show curiosity and are inquisitive, asking lots of questions. Evidence regarding accurate planning and children's development shows that all children, including those who have English as an additional language and children with special educational needs and/or disabilities, make exceptional progress in relation to their starting points.

Children communicate extremely well and are proficient talkers. This includes children learning English as a new language because practitioners have ensured they are fully supported. The nursery is rich in text, including children's home languages which are valued and embraced in everyday play. Recordings have been made, in different languages, of children's favourite stories and they listen in amazement. Practitioners enhance children's language skills as they provide superb activities for children to explore language and literacy. For example, children have learnt to recognise letters and sounds through phonic sessions. Team work is encouraged, and children help one another as they follow recipes to make dough to model and shape into letters. They learn to work together, share and listen to instructions as new words are introduced into their vocabulary, such as sculpt and mould. They are learning to use sign language and have had opportunities to experience Braille, understanding that this is how some people read. This means children are excellent communicators. They confidently write letters, repeating the sounds, and some write their name on their art work. Children are encouraged to write to a pen pal in the sister nurseries and delight when receiving a response. Practitioners are skilful when interacting with children and pose well-considered questions to encourage children to problem solve and think for themselves. For example, when children have added too much water to the dough they are asked about what they think is needed to make it less sticky. Children have established close attachments with their key person, meaning children's emotional well-being is good. Children are superbly prepared for their next stage of learning and the move onto school.

Practitioners are committed to ensure parents are actively involved in their child's learning. Precise assessments are made with parents when children first attend to ensure children are fully supported from the start. A wide range of opportunities are available to engage parents in supporting their child's learning, if they wish. For example, they are positively encouraged to access and contribute to the electronic system, used to record their child's progress within their individual learning journey and learning story. Parents have access to quality resources, such as an exclusive Seymour House reading and writing scheme, meaning children's learning continues and is fully supported at home.

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

Children enthusiastically and excitedly arrive at nursery. They engage in activities, settle quickly and happily say goodbye to their parent. This is because children have formed secure attachments to their key person. Superb information is provided for parents, regarding the importance and the role of the key person. They work closely with the child and their family to develop a collaborative approach to supporting children's unique needs. Comprehensive information is detailed regarding the child's routine and abilities when they

first attend. This enables the key person to have a strong base from which to support and move children forward, to become independent and confident as they explore the provision. The key person plays a significant role in supporting children with changes to their routine. For example, practitioners and parents work well together when babies make the transition from nappies to potty training, or when they move up through the nursery. Children at the nursery show high levels of self-control as they move confidently around. While they know their key person well, they happily approach all practitioners for help, support and cuddles. Children guide their own play and are encouraged to make decisions as they freely access an abundance of resources, both inside and outside. Children choose where they play and are learning how to keep themselves safe through everyday routines. Even very young children understand how to use a doorbell system when they want to play outdoors, alerting staff to ensure sufficient support is provided. Simple, but clear, boundaries are consistently reinforced and understood by the children. They understand the practitioners' expectations of them, and this is significantly enhanced by the use of persona dolls within their activities. Children's achievements and good behaviour are consistently celebrated. For example, children's art work is beautifully framed and displayed in the entrance hall for all to see, creating a strong sense of belonging and self-worth.

Children play in a highly stimulating environment. The three nursery playrooms are extremely well-planned with children in mind. Posters, photographs and visual prompts are all displayed at child height, and lower in the baby room to ensure even crawling babies can see photographs of themselves and their family. Children's learning is superbly supported through the use of wide-ranging resources. Children delight in playing outdoors and, in particular, the sensory play house. Here, children skilfully use a variety of technology, such as torches, music systems and interactive boards. It is designed as a soothing and calm place for children to relax and discover new things. They have immense fun rolling down the grassy bank, but know to be careful not to bump one another as practitioners offer clear guidance on how to stay safe. Children become absorbed in their play when digging the compost and adding water to make mud pies. They excitedly talk about the vegetables and plants they grow, and how tasty the crops are when they eat them for snack. Precise and accurate planning of the outdoor provision means children can explore all areas of learning, in the fresh air, all year round.

Children develop an excellent understanding of how to keep themselves safe and healthy. They understand the importance of good hygiene practices, and know to use tissues to wipe their nose and cover their mouths when they cough. Children can ask questions, use real equipment, and learn about the importance of a healthy diet and hygiene routines to ensure their health. This is because practitioners arrange activities and visitors to the nursery, such as a dentist and a doctor to enhance children's real-life learning. Children help prepare the tables for lunch. They are able to make choices and serve themselves, and do this with skill as they make decisions about portion size. Young babies are supported well at mealtimes but also make good early attempts at feeding themselves. Children enjoy a range of nutritious meals and snacks that are freshly prepared. Careful consideration is given to ensure children's dietary needs are respected. Children are encouraged to help grow, prepare snacks and clear away after themselves at mealtimes. There is, however, scope to further inspire children in learning how to care for the environment through recycling and composting waste foods and packaging.

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

Children's safety and security is considered paramount. The managers and team of practitioners are very knowledgeable regarding their individual responsibility to protect children from harm. This is because they are appropriately trained in safeguarding, and have a comprehensive understanding of how to implement the stringent policies and procedures in place to keep children safe. Rigorous systems are in place to ensure all visitors to the nursery are checked and monitored, so that children feel comfortable with their presence. The manager has an excellent understanding of her responsibility to ensure she meets the requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage, and thorough systems are in place to monitor how well these are implemented. Children benefit from being cared for by professional, qualified and experienced staff. This is because there is a comprehensive recruitment procedure to ensure the best person for the role is appointed. Practitioners complete stringent vetting checks to ensure they are suitable to work with children.

Children benefit as they are cared for by practitioners who are effective in how they teach, and have an exemplary knowledge of how children learn. The manager and team of practitioners deliver an exciting, inspirational and effective educational programme for children, carefully monitored to ensure all areas are suitably covered. Audits of children's progress are stringent, and any gaps in learning are quickly highlighted and addressed. Children make rapid progress as a result of careful and precise planning, tailored to meet each child's needs, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities.

The leadership and focussed programme for professional development inspires all practitioners to strive for excellence and provide a quality provision for children. This is successfully achieved through robust induction, mentoring, performance reviews, regular meetings and peer-on-peer observations. Practitioners' performance is recognised and acknowledged. As a result, the morale of practitioners is high, and they show genuine delight and commitment to their work. Excellent partnerships are in place with parents and others sharing the care of the children attending. Parents are positively encouraged to be active in their child's life at nursery, and have a dynamic role in planning the learning environment. Parents have meetings with the child's key person, providing the practitioners with excellent opportunities to get to know the child and their family well before starting nursery. Parents' contributions are sought in a variety of ways, such as questionnaires, meetings, and stay and play sessions. Positive links are established with other early years settings children may attend, and the sharing of development records ensures consistency of care for children. Teachers are warmly welcomed to visit children in their familiar surroundings when preparing for the transition to school. Parents speak very positively of every aspect of the provision, commenting on the professional, friendly and approachable practitioners. Parents spoken to at the time of inspection feel their comments are valued and that their children are learning exceptionally well. They are extremely happy with the support their children receive and the progress they make.

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	EY472646
Local authority	Essex
Inspection number	952836
Type of provision	Full-time provision
Registration category	Childcare - Non-Domestic
Age range of children	0 - 5
Total number of places	44
Number of children on roll	102
Name of provider	Seymour House Limited
Date of previous inspection	not applicable
Telephone number	01245346643

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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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