

Saplings Nursery

Pledgdon Close, Henham, BISHOP'S STORTFORD, Hertfordshire, CM22 6BJ

Inspection date	06/01/2015
Previous inspection date	25/07/2011

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		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

- Teaching is outstanding. The well qualified and experienced staff effectively use accurate observations and assessments of children's progress to plan and provide activities that enable children to achieve exceptionally well.
- The staff display an excellent knowledge of the nursery's policies and their own individual responsibility to safeguard children. They ensure that children's safety is secured at all times and they effectively teach children how to identify and manage risks for themselves.
- Exceptionally close attachments between the staff and the children ensure that they are happy and enjoy their time in the nursery. Children's close bonds and good relationships with their key person, promotes their emotional well-being excellently. As a result, children thrive in this nursery.
- As a result of highly effective partnerships between parents, external agencies and other professionals, children's individual needs are quickly identified and exceptionally well met. This means that children benefit from the excellent levels of consistency and coherence between home and the nursery.
- The owner, manager and staff have high aspirations and they strive to maintain the outstanding care and learning provided for children. They are very effective in accurately monitoring and evaluating the already outstanding practice. This enables the nursery to identify and meet children's needs exceptionally well.

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 all rooms and in the outside areas.
- The inspector observed and discussed staff practice with the manager.
- The inspector examined a selection of documentation including evidence of the suitability of staff, policies and procedures and children's information.
- The inspector took into account the views of parents spoken to at the time of the inspection.
- The inspector spoke to staff and children throughout the inspection.

Inspector

Susan Parker

Full report

Information about the setting

Saplings Nursery was registered in 2007 and is on the Early Years Register and the compulsory and voluntary parts of the Childcare Register. It operates from a house in the village of Henham, near to Bishop's Stortford. The nursery is privately owned and serves the local community and surrounding area. The nursery is open each weekday from 7.30am until 6.30pm all year round. There are currently 115 children on roll, all of whom are in the early years age group. A bus service is provided for those families who require it. The nursery currently supports a small number of children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities. It also has effective strategies in place to support children who speak English as an additional language. The nursery employs 32 members of staff, of these, 24 hold an appropriate early years qualification at level 3 and above. The manager holds Early Years Professional Status. The nursery also employs an administrator, a cook and a housekeeper.

What the setting needs to do to improve further

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

- expand the already excellent support for children moving on to full-time school through enhancing the links with those schools who are reluctant to engage in partnership working.

Inspection judgements

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

The very well-qualified and experienced staff deliver high-quality teaching and have an excellent understanding of the Early Years Foundation Stage. They accurately observe children and meticulously use the information to precisely measure their progress based on their individual starting points. Children benefit from the rich, varied and imaginative experiences that the staff provide both indoors and outside. Older children spend time in the forest 'classroom' where they learn to safely construct dens, climb trees and learn about the natural world. Children also learn about different animals from their pet fish, turtle, guinea pig, chickens and pet dog. Staff place high priority on enabling children to develop and expand their communication and language each day through play and conversation. For example, they use open-ended questions, asking children about what they are doing, the colours, shape, size or number linked with their play. Staff skilfully give children the time and opportunity to think and answer for themselves. Children who speak English as an additional language are well supported by the staff who use sign language and have knowledge of familiar and useful words in their home language. This is very effective in promoting children's developing speech and language skills. Children who need additional help to meet typical expectations for their age are making excellent progress. Staff work closely with each other, parents and other professionals to provide specific

activities, equipment, resources and routines, which effectively support individual learning needs. As a result, children exhibit the characteristics of effective learning and are confident and eager to take the next steps in their learning and development. The staff have established effective links with most local schools, which enables them to support children's move on to full-time school through visits to the school, visits from the school teachers and by sharing each child's progress and information records. The links with most schools are good, and some outstanding. However, links with some schools are not as outstanding as others. This means that there is scope to expand the outstanding links to include all schools to ensure that children receive the best possible start to their education.

Babies and toddlers are developing their confidence and ability to positively learn and engage in group situations. The staff are very skilled in motivating children to take the next steps in their learning and development. They effectively use gentle encouragement and patience, which inspires the children to try to do things independently. As a result, children relish learning new skills and they eagerly seek out new experiences and use their own ideas. For example, toddlers' physical and independence skills are promoted as staff give them the time to dress themselves in boots and waterproof coveralls to explore in the outdoors in all weathers. Children beam with pride when they achieve their goals and staff praise them for their efforts. Consequently, children show that they are keen and eager to learn. This effectively prepares children to be ready for full-time school.

Staff have established highly effective partnerships with parents. This benefits children by ensuring that detailed information is shared regularly. The use of home learning resources enables families to complement their children's learning at home. For example, children take home learning boxes with activities, resources and information on learning which help parents teach their children in line with nursery teaching. In addition, staff share children's ongoing progress with parents. For example, parents contribute and share information in the children's learning records. Because of the high levels of consistency and collaboration between staff and parents, children's learning and development are exceptionally well promoted.

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

All members of staff display friendly and nurturing characteristics, which enables children to form affectionate and secure bonds with their individual key person and the rest of the staff. As a result, babies and children benefit from having a secure base from which they make rapid growth in their personal, social and emotional development. Children show that they are learning good social skills and manners. They display high levels of self-control and esteem. Babies, toddlers and children all show their ability to take turns, and play with other children. Children's behaviour is exemplary. They are confident, happy and secure in their environment. They freely choose from a wide variety of excellent activities, resources and equipment, indoors as well as outside. Toddlers and children independently choose if they want to play indoors or in the garden. They show how well they can put on their boots and waterproof overalls with minimal help from the attentive staff.

Consequently, children have high levels of independence and are confident.

Individually tailored settling-in procedures, in partnership with parents, support children to feel happy and secure and settle quickly into the nursery. Excellent links with parents ensure that children's routines, care needs and well-being are successfully supported. The nursery place high priority on children's safety and on teaching children how to manage risks and use tools safely.

Children are active and they choose to take part in a wide range of physical activities and exercise indoors and outside in all weathers. The excellent use of natural resources in the outside areas gives children real hands on experiences of nature. This in turn, promotes their positive attitudes to leading healthy lifestyles. Children adopt good personal hygiene routines and they understand why it is important to wash their hands before eating in order to protect themselves from germs. Freshly prepared, appetizing meals and snacks are provided by the cook. Meals are planned taking into account all dietary needs, requirements and habits. Staff sit with children during mealtimes to support their independence in spreading the crackers and to encourage them to eat well. Parents are fully informed about the menu and alternatives for specialised diets are catered for. The staff team are extremely effective in ensuring that all children are emotionally well prepared for the next stage in their learning and are keen to try new experiences. As a result, children's move up to the next stage room within the nursery is seamless. Pre-school children display the skills, confidence and independence they need to be prepared well for full-time school. Staff work closely with parents and teachers from most local schools in order to give children the support they need to confidently meet change and challenge.

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

The leaders and managers of the nursery deliver the safeguarding and welfare requirements to an outstanding level. Staff are clear and confident about the procedures that they would follow if they have a concern about children's welfare. The manager oversees an experienced and well qualified staff team who clearly enjoy their work and are committed to the children in this setting. Staff turnover is minimal. However, the owner and manager place high priority on recruiting skilled staff who are checked for their suitability to work with children.

The manager and senior staff regularly meet and monitor staff's performance through peer reviews, and appraisals. Staff are well motivated and they are rewarded for their contribution to the outstanding levels of care and teaching that they continue to provide. All staff demonstrate a dedication to the ongoing expansion of the excellent service that they deliver to children and their families. Staff provide detailed information for parents regarding the Early Years Foundation Stage and how well their children are achieving. Information about all aspects of the nursery is displayed in the lobby, through informative newsletters and also on the nursery website.

The very effective partnership with parents and other professionals ensures that children receive high levels of consistency in their learning and care. The nursery staff continue to evaluate and adjust their practice to meet the ever changing needs of children and their families. Parents spoken to on the day of the inspection are extremely complimentary about how the staff have helped their children and the strong bonds their children have formed with them. Regular links with other settings and other professionals ensure that children, who have gaps in their learning, are making excellent progress. The excellent knowledge, care and practice displayed by staff is supported with clear records and documentation. Leaders and managers have a strong drive to continue to expand the outstanding levels of care and learning provided for children.

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. We re-inspect nurseries and pre-schools judged as requires improvement within 12 months of the date of 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		There were no children present at the time of the inspection. The inspection judgement is that the provider continues to meet the requirements for registration.
Not met		There were no children present at the time of the inspection. 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	EY347502
Local authority	Essex
Inspection number	849436
Type of provision	
Registration category	Childcare - Non-Domestic
Age range of children	0 - 17
Total number of places	54
Number of children on roll	115
Name of provider	Linda Davies
Date of previous inspection	25/07/2011
Telephone number	01279 851998

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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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