

Fig Tree Day Nursery

12 - 14 Mowbray Close, Frankley, BIRMINGHAM, B45 0ES

Inspection date

20/09/2013

Previous inspection date

20/06/2013

The quality and standards of the early years provision

This inspection:

4

Previous inspection:

3

How well the early years provision meets the needs of the range of children who attend 4

The contribution of the early years provision to the well-being of children 4

The effectiveness of the leadership and management of the early years provision 4

The quality and standards of the early years provision

This provision is inadequate

- Risk assessments are not implemented effectively and as a result, children's health and safety is compromised both indoors and outdoors.
- Suitably qualified staff are not always deployed in the pre-school room to ensure that children's individual needs are met.
- Staff do not obtain accurate information regarding children's dietary requirements or provide drinking water, compromising children's health.
- Systems are not in place to monitor the quality of teaching and learning. As a result, staff's interactions and practice is poor which hinders the progress children make.
- Parents rarely contribute to their children's progress and are not provided with suggestions to support learning at home, meaning a consistent approach is not applied.
- Supervision has little impact in helping staff develop professionally and improve their skills so that children's learning is supported effectively.
- There are no systems in place for self-evaluation. Weaknesses are not identified and therefore, there are no targets in place to improve the quality of the provision.

It has the following strengths

- Children eat a range of healthy meals which they enjoy with relish.
- Staff are aware of the signs and symptoms of abuse in order to protect children from harm.

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 compulsory part of the Childcare Register. This report includes a judgment about compliance with the requirements of that register.

Inspection activities

- The inspector spoke with the nursery manager, staff and children.
 - The inspector observed children having their lunch and tea.
 - The inspector observed activities inside and in the outdoor play area.
- The inspector looked at a sample of the nursery's policies and procedures to include
- safeguarding, risk assessments, Disclosure and Barring Service checks, staff and children's details and children's assessment records.

Inspector

Sally Smith

Full Report

Information about the setting

Fig Tree Day Nursery was registered in 2011 on the Early Years Register and the compulsory part of the Childcare Register. The nursery is situated in purpose-built premises in Frankley, Birmingham. There is an enclosed outdoor area. The nursery serves the local area.

The nursery opens Monday to Friday all year round. Sessions are from 6am to 7pm. Children attend for a variety of sessions. There are currently 40 children on roll who are within the early years age range. The nursery supports children who speak English as an additional language. The nursery provides funded early education for two-, three- and four-year-olds.

The nursery employs 16 members of childcare staff, 10 of whom have qualifications at level 2 and 3. One member of staff has a Bachelor of Arts degree in Early Childhood Studies.

What the setting needs to do to improve further

The provision is inadequate and Ofsted intends to take the following enforcement action:

We will issue a Welfare Requirements Notice with a completion date of 15 November 2013 requiring the provider to:

ensure that staff understand how to use risk assessments effectively so that any hazards are accurately identified and minimised in order to keep children safe

obtain, record and act upon information about children's dietary needs

ensure that routines are organised so that children's individual needs are met, for example, limiting noise and making play spaces calm and orderly so that children who need to sleep, can do so safely and undisturbed

implement an effective behaviour management policy, and procedures, and ensure a named practitioner has the necessary skills to advise other staff on behaviour issues and to access expert advice if necessary, to ensure children are aware of expectations and boundaries to keep them safe.

To meet the requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage the provider must:

- ensure that fresh drinking water is available and accessible to children at all times
- ensure that there is at least one member of staff who holds a full and relevant level 3 qualification caring for children aged three and over so that their individual needs are met
- devise effective systems to monitor, coach, mentor and support staff and students to identify strengths and tackle weak practice. Put in place a programme of professional development to improve staff's knowledge, understanding and skills
- implement effective procedures to monitor and support children's learning by; developing the educational programmes to provide challenging, playful experiences and ensuring staff ask open-ended questions to extend children's language and stimulate their interest through shared attention
- ensure there is a well-resourced and stimulating environment where all resources are organised effectively and children are encouraged to use these, so that they can move, use and combine them in different ways to extend all areas of their learning
- develop methods of working in partnership with parents to support children's

learning and development in the setting and at home

- develop a culture of continuous improvement by using reflective practice and evaluation. Include input from staff and parents, to identify the setting's strengths and priorities for improvement so the needs of all children are met
- make sure staff are proactive in developing a targeted plan to better support children's future learning and development when other professionals are involved.

Inspection judgements

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

Staff's knowledge and understanding of the Early Years Foundation Stage is varied and as a result, some staff are more confident than others in observing, assessing and planning for the next steps in children's learning and development. This is not closely monitored by the management team and therefore some children's learning experiences are not shaped to meet their individual needs. Staff engage with parents at the start of the placement and at times have discussions regarding their child's progress once they have settled into the nursery routine. However, children's learning journals do not reflect their contributions or how they are used to support children's learning. In addition, staff do not provide ideas as to how parents can support their children's learning at home. This means that a consistent and complementary approach is not implemented to support children's development.

The educational programmes for children across the nursery do not provide interesting activities in sufficient depth or breadth to support children effectively across all areas of learning. The quality of teaching requires improvement because staff do not stretch children's learning or challenge them sufficiently. Staff's expectations are not high enough and they do not pay sufficient detail to how rooms are organised or how activities are planned to meet the needs of each child. For example, books in the toddler room are placed in an area which is fenced off from the main area. This means they are difficult for children to freely access when they choose, particularly when this area is used for sleeping children. Children engage in freely-chosen play, accessing the resources available to them. However, these are limited and therefore children are unable to expand upon and build on their interests. For example, a play kitchen in the toddler room is placed against the wall with no other resources such as appropriate tables, seating or cooking utensils to invite children to play. There are very few resources in the pre-school room to stimulate any area of children's development and enable them to make sufficient progress across all areas of their learning. This hinders the opportunities for children to follow their own lines of enquiry and develop the characteristics of effective learning.

Staff miss numerous opportunities to build on children's developing range of speaking and listening skills. For example, children sit while staff read a story but little is done to create an atmosphere that promotes effective listening skills. Children chat to each other and become otherwise distracted, spoiling it for the few children that do pay attention. As a

result, children do not acquire skills and attitudes to support their next stage of learning, such as moving on to school. Staff do little to capture children's interest by using voice intonation or engage children in any way, such as asking them to point to objects on the page. They do not use pertinent questioning, such as how, what or why to check children's understanding or ask them to predict what may happen next. They seldom extend children's thinking, reasoning or widen their vocabulary during the course of their play or during planned activities. For example, children decorate biscuits, the object being to make faces. However, there is no discussion at the beginning of the activity to set the scene and outline the purpose of the activity. Children do not consider solutions to problems, such as how sweets will stick to the biscuits. Instead, staff fetch jam from the kitchen and proceed to spread this on the biscuits without encouraging children to do this for themselves. Occasionally, some staff tune in to children's ideas, for example, one child says that he wants butter instead of jam because, 'they can stick'. While staff sit alongside children and offer words of praise, such as 'that's good' or 'aren't you clever', there is little meaningful interaction to encourage children's understanding, learning and new vocabulary. Many opportunities are missed to talk about colour and texture and no mathematical language is used to explore shape, size and quantity. Often when children do make observations such as 'look I have put two lips on mine', this goes unnoticed by staff.

Children have few opportunities to play outside and when they do, resources are limited and therefore do little to promote their physical skills. Staff do not plan for the outdoor environment to consistently provide interesting and challenging experiences for children. For example, the sandpit remains covered, with an upturned chair positioned on top to prevent children from having access, despite this being one of the few resources available for children to play in. Children are understandably inquisitive and attempt to remove the cover. However, they are told that they cannot play in the sand as it is wet. Staff show little understanding in responding to children's interests or the learning potential this provides. There is little to inspire children to investigate and explore their surroundings or develop an understanding of living things. Children at times grow seeds but an enclosed bed specifically for this purpose has become overgrown and is no longer used. Children have access to some wheeled toys and bikes, although they struggle at times to move these over the bumpy terrain. A small slide provides little challenge for more able children. Babies rarely access the garden or go out in the community, restricting the limited opportunities they have for physical development and access to fresh air. Indoors the more mobile babies occasionally use baby walkers to support their balance and movement. However, space is limited and the room can become overcrowded. This impedes the space that babies, who are not mobile, have to move, roll and stretch safely.

Staff provide planned opportunities for children to explore paint and on these occasions, children show increased levels of interest and concentration. However, the organisation of most rooms means children are not able to freely use creative materials and resources at their own leisure and this limits children's choice, enjoyment and imaginations. Children have some opportunities to build, sort and match using construction toys, puzzles and games. However, children have few opportunities to consider early mathematical concepts, such as recognising number and considering weight, capacity and measurement through practical and enjoyable experiences. Writing areas are available but staff do not consistently provide an interesting range of resources to capture the children's interest. In

addition, writing materials are not provided in the role play areas or outdoors. This means opportunities for children to develop their early writing skills are missed. Children have little opportunity to look at how things work or develop their problem-solving skills. Consequently, children often show poor levels of interest in what is available and there is lack of adequate challenge for children's learning. There are insufficient opportunities for older children to develop their independence, such as serving their own food at lunchtime. As a result, they are not sufficiently equipped with the skills required for their future learning and school readiness.

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

Children form warm relationships with staff. They are happy to seek out cuddles and reassurance when needed. Each child is allocated a key person to oversee their care, learning and development. The key person establishes positive relationships with parents and ensures that they work together so that transitions from home to the nursery run smoothly. For example, gradual settling-in periods are arranged so that children feel confident and secure in their new surroundings. However, staff are not rigorous in ensuring that they obtain all the necessary information to meet children's specific individual needs. For example, in some instances, they are not sure of children's first languages or dietary requirements. This potentially compromises children's health, well-being and development. Despite this, children are appropriately prepared for transition within the nursery as they move from one room to another. Children spend time in their new rooms to familiarise themselves with their new key person, other children and the new routines, helping them to adapt to change successfully.

The nursery has an untidy, unkempt appearance with many items, resources and parts of toys littered on shelves, window ledges and on the floor rather than being stored correctly. Although there is a good amount of space available within the nursery, this is not utilised well and in some areas, space is severely compromised for children. This particularly applies to the baby and pre-school rooms, both located on the first floor of the nursery. An additional room previously used by the pre-school children is no longer in use. This is to take into consideration potential noise levels for the adjoining neighbours. However, staff have not considered how this room can be used more effectively, for example, planning quieter activities, such as a book corner or area where children can paint and draw. As a result, pre-school children have very little room to move around freely or use the limited resources available to them as they choose. This also applies to the baby-room where space is impeded at times when travel cots, high chairs and bouncy chairs are placed around the room. This limits the free space available for mobile children to move around, crawl and eventually learn to walk. There is no comfy furniture where staff and children can sit together or furniture around the room that children can use to pull themselves to standing in order to gain control and balance. Resources in many areas, in particular the garden, are limited or inaccessible to children which severely hinders the play and learning opportunities available to them.

Hygiene is not promoted well within the nursery as there are too many inconsistencies in daily practice and routines. While children wash their hands before having their snacks and meals, they do not wash their hands and faces after they have finished eating or after

cooking activities. For example, children sit at tables to decorate biscuits and once they have finished, wander around with sticky hands, some children eating their biscuits as they play. At times, biscuits are dropped on the floor and then picked up again as children resume eating them. Children help themselves to drink bottles and at times these are also dropped on the floor, particularly by the younger children. These are not consistently picked up by staff who at one point during the inspection, were observed walking round, over and actually kicking a bottle which was on the floor. Children are provided with cutlery to eat their food but not shown how to use this appropriately. As a result, they stab at their food, pick it up with their fingers and some children place food on the table where they attempt to cut it up. Cleaning routines are not robust. In the baby room, food from lunchtime was still on the table and highchairs mid-afternoon, wrappers were on the floor and milk spilt on the carpet in the toddler area was dabbed with a paper towel rather than being disinfected appropriately. Children rest and sleep as and when needed, although this is not organised well. For example, children sleep on mats on the floor at one end of the toddler room which is separated by a wooden fence from the main play area. However, staff at times fail to organise activities effectively to create a calm, relaxing environment for sleeping children. Instead, they take all remaining children into the same area as the children resting and proceed to sing songs or allow the children to play noisily. In addition, they sit very close to children asleep on the floor, with little regard for their safety.

Children at times do as they are asked, although staff do not consistently follow through their requests. For example, children get up and move away from the table before finishing their lunch. They are asked to return, but this is not reinforced, therefore compromising children's understanding of expected routines and boundaries. Some staff ask children to 'sit down now' or 'get off the table', without giving them a reason why. Children are not always appropriately supervised, for example, a child does not want to join in an activity. He is left to his own devices in a separate area of the room where another child is lying on the floor sleeping. He picks up several toys and throws these around, running back and forth around the sleeping child to pick these up. Staff are unaware of this happening and therefore do not intervene to discuss appropriate behaviour. This limits children's understanding of why instructions are important in order to keep them safe and behave responsibly in a range of situations.

Children eat a variety of healthy meals and snacks prepared by the chef. The menus are nutritious and include a selection of fresh vegetables and fruit. Portions are plentiful and children devour these heartily. However, while the nursery promotes a healthy eating ethos, this is not consistently implemented on a day-to-day basis. On the one hand children learn that sweets are not good for their teeth and yet they use a wide selection of coloured sweets to decorate biscuits, which provides conflicting messages. Furthermore, children's individual dietary needs are potentially compromised as staff have little understanding of the nature of ingredients in products. For example, they fail to make the connection with animal gelatine in the sweets children use to decorate their biscuits, knowing that some children do not eat pork. As a result, they do not ask parents or carers specific questions as to whether their child is able to eat products derived from animals. Although children have their own drinking bottles so that they can quench their thirst when needed, these are continually filled with juice. Children do not at any time

throughout the day have access to fresh drinking water which is a requirement of the Early Years Foundation Stage.

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

Leadership and management are inadequate. The day-to-day running of the nursery and the monitoring and evaluation of provision are poor. Performance management is weak. The nursery was last inspected in June 2013. However, since then, Ofsted has received a complaint prompting a full inspection to take place. The concerns relate to adult and child ratios not being maintained, a lack of child supervision and their individual needs not being met and inadequate risk assessments. As a result of the inspection, it was found that the nursery fails to meet a number of legal requirements for learning and development and for safeguarding children and promoting their welfare as specified in the Early Years Foundation Stage. Consequently, children's health, well-being, safety and learning experiences are seriously compromised. This also means that the nursery does not meet some requirements of the Childcare Register.

Staff undertake a basic risk assessment using a checklist which they complete for their base rooms. In addition, an assessment is carried out for the garden. However, staff show little understanding in being able to identify and minimise all risks inside and outside the nursery. For example, a child safety lock on an upstairs window is broken but not recorded on the daily check list. When shown to the manager, she was unaware of this and no action has been put in place for any repairs to be undertaken. This means in its current state, the window can be fully opened. Despite this, chairs are positioned against the wall, immediately under the window and various toys are placed on the windowsill both inside and outside, inviting children to reach for these. Prior to children playing in the garden, the inspector observed that the garden was strewn with various broken toys, tables and chairs. A low-level wooden fence which at one stage contained a planting area for the children was now broken and splintered. Although staff carried out a risk assessment before children went outside to play, the broken items were placed to one side rather than being removed altogether and nothing was done to restrict children from the fence. Although a further slatted wooden fence separates the garden from the conservatory, the small space in-between is strewn with lots of rubbish, including broken plastic bottles, parts of toys and plastic bags. This along with other issues identified elsewhere in the report means that children are exposed to numerous hazards that compromise their safety.

There are limited arrangements in place for the monitoring of the educational programmes and of staff practice. The manager does not carry out observations of staff to assess the quality of their teaching, engagement and interaction with children. This means that she does not have a realistic view of what the learning is typically like for children in the nursery. Therefore weak aspects of teaching are not recognised and remain unchallenged by the manager. There are sufficient staff working with children to ensure correct ratios are maintained. However, they are not always suitably deployed in all rooms of the nursery to ensure qualification requirements are met. For example, although staffing arrangements and the implementation of the educational programmes in pre-school has

been identified as a weakness at the end of the week, steps have not been put in place to rectify this. As a result, there is not always a suitably qualified or experienced member of staff left in charge to guide and support children's learning and development effectively and ensure that they are suitably challenged. Although there is an induction process in place, this is not clearly monitored to ensure that recently recruited staff and students fully understand their roles and responsibilities in keeping children safe, such as what to do in the event of a fire or how to identify and minimise risks to children and themselves.

The nursery has not completed any form of self-evaluation, despite this being raised as a recommendation at their last inspection. As a result, the management team do not have an accurate view of the nursery's performance. Too few steps are taken to evaluate the progress of groups of children. Staff meetings are very rarely held and therefore there are limited opportunities for staff to discuss, share and evaluate practice. While all staff have had supervision sessions, these are very basic and do not accurately reflect strengths or tackle poor practice and underperformance. Records maintained by the manager contain generalised comments rather than evaluating whether the teaching is improving children's learning. The sessions have little impact in helping staff improve their skills or identify a plan of action through specifically targeted support and training to enhance their professional development. As a result, teaching is weak and staff do not support children's learning effectively.

All staff have an appropriate understanding of child protection issues and understand their roles and responsibilities in relation to this. They are aware of the signs of abuse and what to do should they have any concerns. Staff ensure that personal mobile phones and cameras are switched off while they are caring for children. They are only permitted to use these when they are on their breaks and in designated areas within the nursery, away from the children. There are satisfactory recruitment procedures in place to ensure staff are vetted and suitable to work with children, for example, all staff and students have Disclosure and Barring Service checks.

Parents and carers are kept informed about the day-to-day running of the nursery. They access the nursery's website and are also provided with a prospectus outlining some of the key policies and procedures, such as child protection and how to make a complaint. Daily discussions with their child's key person enables them to find out about their child's routines. Parents have previously completed questionnaires and most show they are broadly supportive of the nursery, although several have expressed their desire for further improvements to the layout of the baby room and garden. Partnerships with the local feeder schools, other settings and agencies continue to develop.

The Childcare Register

The requirements for the compulsory part of the Childcare Register are

**Not Met
(with
actions)**

To meet the requirements of the Childcare Register the provider must:

- ensure that risk assessments are thorough and identify all risks and the steps taken

to minimise these so that children's safety is promoted (compulsory part of the Childcare Register).

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 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 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	EY423162
Local authority	Birmingham
Inspection number	936388
Type of provision	
Registration category	Childcare - Non-Domestic
Age range of children	0 - 8
Total number of places	42
Number of children on roll	40
Name of provider	Synconium UK Ltd
Date of previous inspection	20/06/2013
Telephone number	01214480164

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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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