

Finlay Early Education Centre

Finlay Childrens Centre, Tredworth Road, GLOUCESTER, GL4 6TL

Inspection date

Previous inspection date

14/01/2014

Not Applicable

The quality and standards of the early years provision

This inspection:

4

Previous inspection:

Not Applicable

How well the early years provision meets the needs of the range of children who attend	3
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

- Staff do not adequately supervise children at all times to help make sure they are safe.
- Staff have not made the building secure as children can reach the door release button.
- Staff do not identify all aspects of the environment that need checking regularly and do not always implement identified strategies to help keep children secure.
- Staff do not give parents/carers clear guidance how they can help to prevent children leaving unsupervised with reference to not letting children out of the playground gate.
- The provider has not informed the regulator of any manager, which is a requirement.
- The central record of staff's vetting checks does not include all required information.
- The buddy key person system does not ensure that every child's care is tailored to meet their needs.
- At times, children lack direction and challenge to engage in purposeful play and learn.
- Staff do not make parents aware of all required procedures concerning any complaint.
- Self-evaluation is not robust enough to identify all weakness in the provision for children, including staff's knowledge and development, to effectively address continuous improvement.

It has the following strengths

- Children settle to be happy and are cared for by enthusiastic, dedicated staff.

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 a play room and the outside learning environment.
- The inspector had discussions with management, a company advisor, staff, children and parents/carers.
- The inspector undertook a joint observation with a staff member outdoors.
- The inspector sampled a range of documentation, including children's records, planning, safeguarding procedures, policies and improvement plans.

Inspector

Angela Cole

Full report

Information about the setting

Finlay Early Education registered in 2013 and is one of six settings in the area managed by 4 Children. The setting is situated in Finlay and Tredworth Children's Centre, in Gloucester. There are two play rooms, a sensory/soft play room and two enclosed, outdoor areas. The setting is open each weekday during term time, from 8.45am to 11.45am for children aged three and four years. It opens from 12.30pm to 3.30pm for children aged two and three years. The setting is registered on the Early Years Register and there are 44 children on roll in the early years age range. The setting currently supports children with special educational needs and/or disabilities and children learning English as an additional language. The setting is in receipt of funding for the provision of free early education for children aged two, three and four years. There are four members of staff working with the children, who all hold appropriate early years childcare qualifications. The staff have close links with the children's centre on site.

What the setting needs to do to improve further

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

- make sure that staff supervise children at all times
- take reasonable steps to ensure the safety of children by making the premises secure
- develop the risk assessment to cover all hazards for children, with particular regard to security
- make sure parents/carers are made fully aware of policies and procedures, particularly those that safeguard children from being able to leave the setting unsupervised
- record all required information about staff identity checks and vetting processes that have been completed
- strengthen the key person system through use of a buddy so that every child's care is tailored to meet their needs
- consider the individual needs, interest and stages of development of each child and use this information to plan purposeful play for each child through a mix of adult-led and child-initiated activities
- ensure the written procedure for complaints is complete with details about making a written record of a complaint that will be available to the regulator and make this accessible to parents/carers
- develop systems to review and assess practice, including improving staff's knowledge and their development, in order to improve the quality of the learning, development and care and secure continuous improvement.

Inspection judgements

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

Children demonstrate they are content and happy at the setting. They enjoy playing with toys and equipment and participating in activities that promote their learning appropriately across all areas of learning. Overall, staff have a sound understanding of the learning and development requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage. Staff know some children

from their attendance at earlier groups in the children's centre and continue support already in place. Staff visit each new family at home to learn about the children's starting points and capabilities. They know to focus the organising of routines and their planning for children's ongoing progress on children's individual needs to extend their learning. However, the lack of an effective buddy key person system sometimes results in less than robust support for children's individual next steps in learning. Timely interventions help children who need additional support to close gaps in their development, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities. Staff gain information about children before they start at the setting. They strive to work with parents to provide a shared and consistent approach to help their children progress. Families meet with staff to discuss children's progress and share about some opportunities to encourage parents to extend their children's learning at home.

Staff are warm and caring so that children enjoy activities individually and as groups. Separate planning ensures that younger children attending in the afternoons play and investigate appropriate quality toys stored at their level. Staff assess each child's levels of communication and language using materials from the 'Every child a talker' programme. Consequently, staff support children's language skills suitably, including for those learning English as an additional language. Sometimes during the sessions, staff engage them in conversations backed up by signing that encourage them to communicate, for example about how they wish to use toys to play with their special friends.

Staff provide a range of toys and equipment for two-year-old and pre-school children to use for their own play and learning. They encourage children to learn about their wider world through following their own interests. For example, children suggest the symbol for today's weather and talk about their new siblings. They begin to experiment as they play with water from the outside tap and dig in the dried oats. Pre-school children role play as they offer 'meals' and join in action games, including 'What's the time, Mr. Wolf?' These activities demonstrate their emerging communication, language and mathematical skills and, sometimes, children persevere for long times at their play. However, staff do not take every opportunity to extend children's learning as, at times, some children lack direction. Staff do not offer consistently focused challenges based on children's chosen play, for example as they 'fight' at length with soft toys making squealing noises.

Children enjoy some group activities. For example, during song times, they confidently suggest the titles of well-known songs and join in with familiar words. Children benefit when staff introduce stimulating activities into daily routines. For example, children listen hard to nonsense words that rhyme with their names as they leave the group in turn to wash before snack time. Sometimes, staff do things for children without first encouraging them to try, such as placing their paintings to dry and naming their 'work'. Nevertheless, children receive appropriate support to make progress in their learning and development to be ready for the next stage in their education.

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

Staff take some positive steps to promote children's well-being. However, the weaknesses in staff and managements' knowledge and implementation of the safeguarding and welfare requirements of the Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage mean children's well-being cannot be assured. Each child is allocated a key person but this system is not well embedded. When they have settled, children demonstrate that they are happy and confident at the setting. However, the consistency of the key person support that children receive varies in helping them to separate from their parent/ carer and developed settled relationships. As a result, care practices regarding the use of key persons do not support all children's emotional well-being and welfare. This is a breach of a specific legal requirement.

The relaxed, friendly practice of staff appropriately supports children to enjoy what they are doing. However, staff do not have sufficient knowledge of the range of safeguarding issues to ensure that children remain safe in all circumstances. This impacts on, overall, how safe children are at the setting. Staff remind children to sit on their chairs so they do not fall and, overall, manage children's behaviour appropriately. They use some positive strategies to help encourage children's self-motivation and to praise helpful behaviour.

Children are able to make some progress in their physical development. They choose whether to be in or out of doors for most of the first half of the session. After their snack, they are required to play outdoors in a playground where physical equipment is available, such as wheeled toys or hoops, but there is not a robust choice of resources for varied play and learning. As considerable, low-level, room storage is in place indoors, children independently help themselves to the resources available. Staff are aware that accessible options are limited by the use of only one of the two playrooms. They vary children's choices by setting out equipment for activities on a four-weekly rota and offering additional resources, such as a rug to extend children's den play.

Children tell each other to wash before eating and staff supervise them closely so that they follow suitable hygiene procedures to reduce the risk of cross-infection. Snack time is social occasion where staff sit with groups of children while they eat. Children benefit from the varied snacks freshly prepared by staff and served by themselves, which meet their individual dietary needs. Staff talk to children about the choice of nutritious foods and drinks on offer so children begin to learn about the importance of healthy eating.

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

This inspection took place because concerns were raised to Ofsted about the staffing arrangements, child supervision and the safety of the premises. The inspection found that staffing arrangements now meet requirements as children are always either within sight or hearing of staff to help keep them safe. Staff have taken some significant steps to improve child supervision and the safety of the premises. However, child supervision is not always robust enough to ensure their safety and security at all times, particularly regarding children's access to the main door release button. As a result, the premises are still not secure and therefore, children's safety is compromised. The provider is required to take

further action as the setting breaches specific legal requirements.

The provider has insufficient understanding of the safeguarding and welfare requirements of the Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage. Staff receive in-house training on child protection to be aware of systems to follow. The designated person is currently the children's centre manager, as the designated person in the setting has not yet attended booked training. The arrangements enable staff to identify, understand and respond to some concerns to help protect children.

The setting is currently undergoing changes in leadership. The provider has not sent Ofsted any information about those in the position of manager since the registration. This is a breach of a specific legal requirement. Ofsted will not take action in relation to this non-notification. The setting holds a record of information about identity checks and vetting processes to show that staff are checked to have unsupervised contact with children. However, the record does not show who obtained the Disclosure and Barring Service checks, which is a breach of a specific legal requirement, and this information is not clear in practice because of managerial changes. As a result, the provider does not meet their responsibilities for safeguarding children.

Staff partially risk assesses the premises and outdoor spaces and review this after an incident. However, the risk assessment regarding security is incomplete about procedures for children arriving and about children's access to the main door release knob. In addition, staff do not follow all recorded procedures to help keep children secure and safe at collection times. As risk assessment is not complete or robustly implemented, there is a breach of a specific legal requirement.

Staff work to policies provided by the managing company for the care of children in the early years. They make some available in the children's centre entrance, including regarding safeguarding and complaints. However, staff do not make sure parents are made fully aware of policies and procedures, in particular those that safeguard children from being able to leave the setting unsupervised. The complaint procedure does not let parents know that the setting will keep a written record about any complaint or that this will be made available to Ofsted. These are further breaches of specific legal requirements.

Staff have an adequate understanding of the learning and development requirements and complete the required progress checks for two-year-old children. They monitor children's progress regularly and begin to work at closing gaps in children's achievements. Staff work closely with other early years providers and agencies to support shared children, two-year-old children and children with special educational needs and/or disabilities. For example, key persons are accompanied by a staff member from the children's centre to visit two-year-old and their families at home.

Staff value the views of parents expressed in conversation and meetings and often take regard of children's expressed wishes and preferences. Staff talk with each parent or carer about their child's progress and next steps and share information about their activities. Some parents say they are pleased that their children are cared for by staff who they feel know their children well and challenges them to learn. However, the setting's self-

evaluation is limited as the management is not aware of all aspects to improve. Management has not acted on the responsibility to make staff aware of all current legislation in the Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage. Staff attend meetings and the company offers training in-house. Permanent staff are currently being supported by a company early years advisor to improve consistent practice for observation, assessment and planning for children's progress. Some local authority training is booked or being sought regarding in-depth child protection understanding and for the special educational needs and/or disabilities coordinator being appointed. However, the management has not sought other ways of building up staff's professional development, such as responding to a communication from the local authority advisor. As a result, staff have not increased their knowledge to demonstrate a complete understanding of their role and legal responsibilities.

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	EY463861
Local authority	Gloucestershire
Inspection number	948928
Type of provision	Sessional provision
Registration category	Childcare - Non-Domestic
Age range of children	2 - 5
Total number of places	24
Number of children on roll	44
Name of provider	4 Children
Date of previous inspection	not applicable
Telephone number	01452 311 793

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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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