

Apple Blossom Day Nursery

Apple Blossom Day Nursery, London Road, Strete Raleigh, Whimple, EXETER, EX5 2PT

Inspection date

01/05/2014

Previous inspection date

18/11/2013

The quality and standards of the early years provision

This inspection:

3

Previous inspection:

4

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	3
The effectiveness of the leadership and management of the early years provision	3

The quality and standards of the early years provision

This provision requires improvement

- Children who are settled into the nursery are secure and confident because staff usually give a good level of attention and have developed supportive relationships.
- Children behave well because staff have established appropriate routines and provide consistent explanations of expectations, so children know what is expected of them.
- Teaching is carried out thoughtfully and staff know what individual children need to learn next when planning activities.
- Staff are clear about their child protection responsibilities, so keep children safe.

It is not yet good because

- The provider/ manager does not have effective contingency arrangements to ensure that there are enough staff to care for children in the required adult-to-child ratios so that children's needs are met well at all times.
- Parents are not given sufficient information about the staff caring for their children to help the immediate establishment of a supportive relationship with the key person.
- The provider/manager has not ensured that self-evaluation processes are rigorous.

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 of the nursery rooms and outdoors.
- The inspector spoke with the staff, and some parents and children.
- The inspector held discussions with the provider/manager.
- The inspector carried out a joint observation with the nursery manager.
- The inspector examined some relevant documents and records.

Inspector

Susan Ranson

Full report

Information about the setting

Apple Blossom Day Nursery registered in 2000 and is privately owned. It operates from a cabin-style building on the outskirts of the village of Whimble in Devon. Children are cared for in two play rooms: the 'Apple' room for the older children and the 'Blossom' room for the children under three-years-old, and there is a shared dining room. There is an enclosed garden and a covered veranda for outdoor play. The nursery is registered on the Early Years Register and both the compulsory and voluntary parts of the Childcare Register.

There are currently 34 children on roll in the early years age group, and 29 children of school age. The nursery is in receipt of funding for the provision of free early education to children aged three and four years. The nursery supports children with special educational needs and/or disabilities. The nursery is open each weekday from 7.45am to 6pm, all year round, except for one week in December. The owner manages and works in the nursery, and employs six staff. The manager holds a level 3 qualification in childcare and a level 5 qualification in management. Three of the other staff hold level 3 qualifications in early years child care and education.

What the setting needs to do to improve further

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

- ensure that contingency arrangements for staff absence and the deployment of staff are effective in maintaining suitable adult-to-child ratios to meet children's needs well
- develop the self-evaluation system to identify and address all weaknesses in practice, including focusing on raising the quality of teaching in adult-led activities so these are managed well to help all children progress.
- make sure that parents are clear about who is looking after their child and who their allocated key person is as soon as they start nursery so that parents and children can establish a trusting relationship with the key person as soon as possible.

Inspection judgements

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

Teaching in the nursery is satisfactory overall. The staff plan appropriate activities across the seven areas of learning and include what individual children need to learn next in their planned programme. However, adult-led activities are not always successful in delivering the desired outcomes, because these are not always sufficiently well organised. For example, during an adult-led mathematics activity only some children focus on the key ideas, because too many competing options are offered. This means progress is slowed because children do not learn what was intended. The children experience suitable activities, however, and staff have appropriate expectations of children's capabilities. For example, three- and four-year-old children are expected to sign their work and make records of their activities. Such activities help children gain control of their hand muscles to have an effective grip for writing. Activities promote children's communication and language development, such as by extending their vocabularies as they hear and use words including 'dinosaur' and 'twig'.

The staff use their knowledge of the children's learning and development to plan activities designed to promote learning for particular individuals and groups. However, when staff numbers are low there is sometimes less support for learning because the staff are focused on care routines and safety. This reduces learning. Usually, the children are confident and interested. They are engaged by the activities on offer and enjoy their time at the nursery. This is because the adults in the nursery have established generally calm and caring relationships and an environment in which children feel secure.

The manager and deputy have introduced a new record keeping and planning system which uses key persons' observations and assessments to identify the next steps in learning for individual children. These are then used to plan the programme. This means that staff are able to identify the learning for individuals that they hope to achieve from their planned activities and that focus their teaching. Children with particular needs have been identified and staff work conscientiously with families and other professionals to support their learning and development. Children with special educational needs and/or disabilities are making satisfactory progress. The planned curriculum is relevant to the children and they are interested in what they are doing. Staff respond in a warm and friendly manner to individual children throughout the sessions.

Parents and carers are asked a useful range of questions about their children on settling into the nursery, and this information is the starting point for the children's records. Parents are able to talk to staff when they drop off and collect their children. They can have a notebook for messages between home and nursery and they see their child's record file when they wish. These arrangements keep parents up to date about their children's progress. Parents spoken to on the day of inspection were very happy with the nursery, the approachability of the staff and their access to information about their children's activities.

Children in the nursery are being suitably prepared for school. The staff have established worthwhile routines for the children, such as how to move safely as a group from room to room. They expect children to be appropriately independent in self-care. They provide useful, relevant pencil and paper activities for the older children, such as writing down their findings during experimental activities, as part of their preparation for their move into reception class. Some of the older children have good writing skills and some can

recognise, write and order numerals. The nursery is providing a worthwhile foundation for the next stage in the children's learning because the programme planned by staff is based on their knowledge of the children and their development.

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

The nursery provides satisfactory support for children's well-being overall. Staff greet children and parents warmly and children come into nursery happily. There is a well-established key person system, however, parents who are starting a child at the nursery are not immediately introduced to a key person and this delays the opportunity for the child to start to form a secure relationship from the point of entry, as required. This means children and their families who are new to the nursery are not given consistent support immediately.

Behaviour in the nursery is good. Children are calm and behave well, because the adults have high expectations of children's behaviour and have established sensible and supportive routines. This means that the nursery is a calm and positive place for the children, and this in turn helps them to participate confidently in the activities provided. Staff encourage children to be independent both in looking after themselves and as learners. For example, the nursery environment includes a satisfactory range of resources that staff arrange so children can choose what they wish to do. These arrangements help prepare children for the next stage in learning.

Staff encourage children to have a go. They use praise appropriately to give them confidence to attempt tricky tasks, such as doing up a coat zip. Such encouragement develops children's confidence. Staff are fully aware of their responsibilities to safeguard children and of the procedures to follow when they have any concerns about a child, including making referrals themselves if required.

Staff teach children the fundamentals of healthy living. They teach children to wash their hands for example, and many do so without reminders. Children have exercise through using the garden area, enjoying having a run around. They take part in activity and action rhymes in which they learn to move in different ways.

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

The registered provider for the nursery is also its manager. She meets all but two of the requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage. The adult-to-staff ratios are not always sufficiently well organised to ensure that all children's needs are met, particularly in regard to their learning. This is because the right number of staff is not always available, such as when staff call in sick and agency staff are delayed. During these times children of varying ages are grouped together. The older children do not have access to their resources which are suited to their abilities, so their learning is curtailed. However, such times are of short duration and staff maintain all children's safety, so the failure to meet the requirement

does not have a significant impact and children are not at risk.

The manager has appointed a suitable deputy since the previous inspection and re-organised the responsibilities within the nursery so that there is now a clear leadership structure. Senior staff have been given time away from the children to develop the work of the nursery. The planning of the educational programme has been improved as a result and is now satisfactory, showing that the manager and staff have the capacity to develop and improve their practice. The worthwhile assessments and records that are currently kept enable the manager to identify children in need of support. The nursery liaises appropriately with parents and other professionals to develop specific strategies to help individual children to progress. All such arrangements contribute to meeting children's needs and demonstrate the provider's desire to drive improvement.

The manager has instituted a system of supervision which includes observing staff with children and supporting them to develop their work. She makes appropriate evaluations of practice and has identified suitable training, for example, refresher training in working with the youngest children. Nevertheless, some adult-led activities are not organised well enough to engage all children to progress in their learning as planned.

Parents speak well of the nursery and the opportunities they have to exchange information using the shared notebook and informal conversations. The staff collect useful information about the children before they settle in but do not consolidate this through establishing the key-person system on entry which is a statutory requirement. Nevertheless, they work conscientiously with parents to establish shared strategies, for example, for behaviour management.

The provider/manager has not established a process of rigorous and systematic self-evaluation. This means that while some useful improvements have been made she is not rigorously evaluating the work of the nursery to identify any areas that require development. This means that areas requiring attention may be missed, including some requirements, and that improvements may be delayed unnecessarily.

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. 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	105825
Local authority	Devon
Inspection number	963169
Type of provision	Full-time provision
Registration category	Childcare - Non-Domestic
Age range of children	1 - 10
Total number of places	29
Number of children on roll	63
Name of provider	Karen Irene Winson
Date of previous inspection	18/11/2013
Telephone number	01404 822251

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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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