

Seahorses Day Nursery

Winterleys House, Albert Road, London, NW6 5DR

Inspection date

Previous inspection date

25/03/2014

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

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

- The provider does not ensure that children are safeguarded. Not all staff have secure understanding of child protection issues or of their roles and responsibilities in keeping children safe through effective risk assessment.
- The provider does not ensure that recruitment procedures are sufficiently robust or that staff are deployed appropriately to supervise children.
- Children's health is compromised because staff do not implement health and safety policies and procedures effectively. The contents of the first-aid box are not suitable to meet children's needs.
- Teaching is weak and hinders children's learning. Staff do not plan effectively for individual children. The learning environment is uninspiring.
- Staff do not manage children's behaviour effectively, restricting children's development.
- The key- person system does not work well. Staff do not always give sufficient support to children with additional needs.
- The staff do not organise routines appropriately to meet all children's needs.

It has the following strengths

- Children are provided with fresh food cooked on the premises.

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 and routines in the playroom.
The inspector completed a joint observation with the manager of a teaching activity,
- and held discussions with senior managers, the provider and the local authority development worker.
- The inspector talked with some staff and children during the inspection.
- The inspector took account of the views of parents through sampling available documentation and holding discussions with them on the day of the inspection.
The inspector looked at a sample of available documentation, such as observations,
- progress tracking sheets, activity plans, the safeguarding policy, behaviour management policy, complaints records, staff suitability records and attendance records.

Inspector

Helen Steven

Full report

Information about the setting

Seahorses Day Nursery registered in 2013 and is one of three nurseries run by a private provider. It operates from a community hall in Kilburn, in the London Borough of Brent. There is access to one room that has a low-level divider to provide a separate area for babies. There is an enclosed secure outdoor play area.

The nursery is open each weekday from 7.30am to 6.30pm all year round, except Christmas and bank holidays. The nursery is registered on the Early Years Register and the compulsory and voluntary parts of the Childcare Register. It is in receipt of funding for the provision of free early education to children aged two, three and four years. Children attend for a variety of sessions. There are currently 25 children on roll in the early years age range.

Children with special educational needs and/or disabilities and children who are learning to speak English as an additional language attend the nursery. The nursery employs seven full-time members of staff and a part-time cook. Five staff members hold appropriate early years qualifications and three staff are working as apprentices in order to gain or improve their qualifications. The manager holds qualified teacher status and the area manager holds early years practitioner status.

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 requiring the provider to:

ensure all staff understand the setting's safeguarding policy and procedures, have an up-to-date knowledge of safeguarding issues, can identify and understand the signs and symptoms that may indicate abuse and neglect, and are able to respond in a timely and appropriate way to such issues

ensure all staff are aware that concerns about children's safety and welfare need to be referred without delay to agencies with statutory responsibility for safeguarding, which are the local children's social care services and, in emergencies, the police

ensure the safeguarding policy and procedures are in line with the guidance from the relevant Local Safeguarding Children Board (LSCB), and includes an explanation of the action to be taken in the event of an allegation being made against a member of staff

implement effective systems to ensure that all staff are suitable to work with children,

which includes obtaining an enhanced Disclosure and Barring Service check for all staff

ensure an effective behaviour management policy and procedures are implemented within the setting and that staff are consistent in their application of these

assess the risks to children's safety and identify how these risks will be removed or minimised; this is with particular regard to toys and items that are choking hazards and tripping hazards

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

- strengthen the key- person system to ensure that every child's care is tailored to meet their individual needs, to help the child become familiar with the setting, to offer a settled relationship with the child and build a relationship with parents particularly in regard to children with additional needs
- ensure the quality of teaching is improved by planning activities and the learning environment effectively to meet the individual needs of children
- ensure that staffing arrangements meet the needs of all children and ensure their safety; this is with regard to ensuring that there is a suitable deputy to take charge in the manager's absence, particularly at the end of each day, that there are suitably trained staff working with babies and that babies are not waiting for long periods at snack and lunchtime
- ensure the first-aid box in the baby room has appropriate contents for use with children.

Inspection judgements

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

The quality of teaching is weak. This hinders children's learning and means that they do not make sufficient progress. A number of staff are apprentices and some managers have only recently achieved a relevant qualification at level three. This inexperience affects the quality of children's experiences. Staff sit with the children and ask basic questions, for example about shape and colour, but they do not encourage children to think for themselves. Although the range of resources and the available activities reflect all areas of learning, staff do not plan to use these effectively to support children's personal learning. For example, group times include children of all ages, including babies, and therefore the story or activity is not appropriate for each child and does not sustain all children's

interest. Although staff have some pictorial prompts to help children who need additional support, these are not used routinely to promote communication. Staff switch on a computer briefly but do not set up a program to enable children to use it.

There are systems to observe, assess and monitor the children's progress. However, these are not effective because some adults working with the children do not gather sufficient information from parents or observe children settling in, in order to provide them with activities that spark their interest and engage them in learning. There are systems to share a summary of children's progress with parents, including when their children are aged between two and three years as required.

The staff do not work effectively as a team to ensure that activities are planned well to meet all children's needs. For example, children sitting in the book corner, or at the table waiting for their food, enjoy singing favourite songs such as 'Wind the bobbin up' led by a staff member. They are encouraged to join in the hand actions but become confused when another staff member begins another game at the same time where children are told to put their hands on their heads. Some positive interaction takes place when staff members sit with individual babies and children to read stories, which introduces them to the pleasure of books. Staff encourage children to count during play and ask them about colours.

Staff set out a shaving foam activity to encourage children to make patterns and marks with their fingers. Children use vehicles to leave patterns and tracks in the mixture. Staff provide activities, such as painting, to enable children to explore and mix colours. These activities help children develop their hand skills in preparation for learning to write. Overall, however, the weaknesses in teaching, particularly in the quality of the staff team's interaction with children, the poor use of resources and lack of an interesting environment outweigh the few positive aspects of teaching and mean that children do not make sufficient progress to move on to the next stage in their learning or to school.

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

Children's well-being is not adequately assured because not all staff, including managers, have a secure understanding of safeguarding issues. This means children's welfare is not adequately promoted. In addition, staff pay insufficient attention to promoting children's safety and are not always observant enough to keep children from harm. The key-person system is ineffective in helping children form secure emotional attachments with an adult who knows them well. This stems from poor deployment of staff and the lack of information sought from parents at the start of the children's placement. Key persons do not hold babies closely when feeding them milk from a bottle, laying them instead on a cushion to hold their bottle independently. This practice is not effective in ensuring staff develop a special bond with staff during the settling-in period.

The staff have not put enough care into providing a safe and stimulating environment for

babies and children. Toys are placed on tables or on the floor without staff being creative in making them safe and interesting for the children. For example, plastic animals are in a pile on a mat in the baby area. Staff state this arrangement is to help children to learn animal names but children do not find the toys appealing. Therefore, the objective is lost because staff have not thought through how to make the activity capture the children's attention and motivate learning. Similarly, the role play area lacks resources to trigger children's imaginative play. Staff have not planned the area to help children make connections in their learning. For example, there are no resources to encourage children to try their early writing skills.

Resources are stored at low level and children and babies are able to choose what they want to play with, which goes some way to encouraging their independence. Some children are forming friendship groups and enjoy playing alongside others. However, staff do not manage behaviour effectively. They do not make their expectations clear by giving explanations that children understand, for example, when teaching them how to share. This upsets children so their behaviour deteriorates. This poor teaching hinders children's personal, social and emotional development.

Children are gaining awareness of how to keep themselves safe in the event of an emergency because staff organise regular fire drills. Managers make notes about the drills and use these to improve practice. Although records are not explicit to the reader about issues arising, management recognises that one of the practices was unsuccessful because staff were unsure about which exit to use. This was discussed with staff so they are now clear about the procedure. Regular head counts are carried out and documents show how many children are on site at any one time in the day. These records are used as part of the evacuation process to help ensure children's safety, and for historical records to demonstrate staff-to-child ratios have been met.

Children enjoy a healthy-balanced diet because food is freshly prepared on site and meets children's individual dietary needs. Staff make sure each child has food suited to them through the use of information cards hung on the back of children's chairs. Staff remind children not to put these around their necks, demonstrating knowledge of the risk these might present.

Management does not always think through the best way to introduce new systems when attempting to make changes to the provision and routines. For example, the staff have recently introduced children to the idea of serving themselves at meal times and to scraping and clearing away their plates after the meal. However, some equipment, such as the serving spoons, is too large and jugs are too heavy for children to use. This means the process requires additional staff to give assistance and children are unsuccessful in taking on these small responsibilities. This affects both the deployment of staff elsewhere and the children's confidence.

There are suitable procedures in place to prevent cross infection. For example, staff teach children to wash their hands after toileting which helps to raise their awareness of good hygiene practices. However, staff ask children to repeat their hand washing as they touch the remainder of the shaving foam activity that has not been cleared away, demonstrating that staff do not reflect on the effectiveness of their practice.

While staff recognise the importance of children playing outdoors and having fresh air, and an outdoor area is available, in practice it is not used by all children regularly. This is because staff do not ensure children have suitable attire, such as boots, to enable them to be outdoors in different weathers. This does not help children gain a positive attitude to playing outside as part of a healthy lifestyle. Children have access to a small indoor treadmill but staff are not sufficiently vigilant to ensure all children use this safely. As a result, accidents occur. In the baby room, staff provide suitable resources to aid babies' walking. There is room for babies to crawl but crawling and walking cannot be practised safely because staff leave toys around the floor which are trip hazards.

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

The provider does not meet all of the requirements of either the Early Years Foundation Stage or the Childcare Register. This inspection took place as a result of concerns raised to Ofsted relating to the safeguarding and welfare of the children at the nursery. These concerns related to emergency evacuation procedures, staff-to-child ratios, staff suitability, staff qualifications, equal opportunities, behaviour management and the planning and organisation of children's activities and routines. Evidence gathered at inspection found that the provider does not assure children's safety and well-being, or promote their learning and development adequately.

Arrangements for safeguarding children are inadequate. Not all staff demonstrate a sufficient understanding of child protection issues and how to implement the nursery's safeguarding policy. The provider has an expectation that all children's injuries sustained away from the nursery are recorded. However, staff do not routinely record children's existing injuries in line with the policy in order to protect children. An allegation of how a member of staff handled children was not considered to be a safeguarding issue by management despite the fact that managers met with the member of staff and gave a warning regarding her conduct. This demonstrates further that correct safeguarding procedures were not followed. The provider states that her managers did not notify her of this incident in line with stipulated procedures.

The provider does not ensure that managers who are promoted within the company have additional training relevant to their new role. This means they are not secure in their knowledge of the procedures relevant to their new responsibilities in order to safeguard children. Recruitment procedures are not robust. The provider does not ensure that adequate checks are carried out on staff prior to them caring for children; for example, staff are working prior to any references being undertaken and before a Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) check is sought. Nevertheless, staff are clear that anyone without a check is not to be left alone with children. All staff are aware that unvetted staff do not change nappies. This understanding helps to promote children's well-being to some degree. The provider has an expectation that staff fund their own DBS check when

appointed, which at times delays this process.

Staff are not deployed well. Settling babies are not supported by their key person because they are not in the area for significant periods due to working with older children. The settling babies are left with the cook, who is not qualified in childcare, or with an apprentice. This results in the babies being distressed for a lot of their time. This does not promote secure attachments. Consideration is not given to ensuring that the person in charge in the absence of a manager is suitable to do so. The manager works on the early shift, but the deputy's shifts rotate weekly between early and late shifts. This means that the deputy is often on the same shift as the manager. As a result, a staff member who holds a level three qualification is the person in charge at the end of the day. This includes times when the staff member is on a trial week and has not been suitably vetted.

The provider does not ensure that staff implement the learning and development requirements appropriately. They do not promote children's personal, social and emotional development effectively, for example, through promoting behaviour management strategies consistently that are appropriate to children's stages of development. Staff use phrases such as 'Sit down and do as you are told'. They do not work as a team so one child is told to 'sit down' by three different staff members within seconds. There is emphasis on insisting that children, including toddlers, say 'sorry' to their peers. Little consideration is given to the fact that young children do not understand the meaning behind this. The toddlers learn that in order to be able to continue to play they need to make this gesture but it does not make any difference to their future behaviour. This demonstrates a lack of understanding of child development and behaviour management techniques. Staff are not confident in handling issues of dispute between children fairly.

Management do not ensure that routines are well organised so the nursery is, at times, chaotic and noise levels are high. Staff sit babies in their low chairs in preparation for lunch. However, they are in the chairs for over 15 minutes before being served. Some fall asleep before the lunch arrives. This arrangement fails to meet their needs.

Risk assessments are ineffective and staff are not always sufficiently vigilant in removing safety hazards. They do not check the environment is free from items that might cause babies to choke, such as a wooden bead and elastic bands in a space under a cabinet that is accessible to crawling babies. This shows that not enough is done to promote children's safety.

The leadership of the nursery has changed in the past few months and there is now an acting manager in place. This is the first inspection carried out since the nursery was taken over by, and registered under, the new owner. A self-evaluation document forwarded to Ofsted shows that managers feel the setting provides a good -quality service. However, through discussion at the inspection, the manager, area manager and provider demonstrate that they are aware of some of the areas of weakness and have raised some of the issues in staff meetings. Nevertheless, at the time of inspection, there are significant weaknesses that place children at risk of harm.

Staff make some information available for parents in the nursery lobby, for example, by displaying legal documentation and information about the staff team. Parents receive

regular newsletters and gain information about their children's day through daily sheets, so they know about nursery events. They receive written progress checks for children aged between two and three years. Parents spoken to during the inspection report that they find the staff 'friendly' and that they receive information on a daily basis about what their child has been doing at nursery. They report that staff attempt to address concerns, but they state communication could be better and that the nursery is not always 'organised well'.

The staff have links with other agencies in order to aid families in obtaining support that their children may require. The manager, who is the new special educational needs coordinator, has attended relevant training but this training has not shown any impact, so children's individual needs remain unmet.

The Childcare Register

The requirements for the compulsory part of the Childcare Register are

**Not Met
(with
actions)**

The requirements for the voluntary part of the Childcare Register are

**Not Met
(with
actions)**

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

- implement the statement of procedures to be followed for the protection of children, intended to safeguard the children being cared for from abuse or neglect (compulsory part of the Childcare Register)
- develop effective systems to ensure that any person caring for, or in regular contact with children is suitable to work with children which must include obtaining an enhanced Disclosure and Barring Service check, is of integrity and good character, has skills and experience suitable for the work and is physically and mentally fit for the work (compulsory part of the Childcare Register)
- undertake a risk assessment of the premises and equipment immediately to ensure that all necessary measures are taken to minimise any identified risks (compulsory part of the Childcare Register)
- ensure that children's behaviour is managed in a suitable manner (compulsory part of the Childcare Register)
- ensure that the childcare is inclusive by taking all reasonable steps to ensure that the needs of each child, relating to their childcare, are met (compulsory part of the Childcare Register)
- implement the statement of procedures to be followed for the protection of children, intended to safeguard the children being cared for from abuse or neglect (voluntary part of the Childcare Register)

- develop effective systems to ensure that any person caring for, or in regular contact with children is suitable to work with children which must include obtaining an enhanced Disclosure and Barring Service check, is of integrity and good character, has skills and experience suitable for the work and is physically and mentally fit for the work (voluntary part of the Childcare Register)
- undertake a risk assessment of the premises and equipment immediately to ensure that all necessary measures are taken to minimise any identified risks (voluntary part of the Childcare Register)
- ensure that children's behaviour is managed in a suitable manner (voluntary part of the Childcare Register)
- ensure that the childcare is inclusive by taking all reasonable steps to ensure that the needs of each child, relating to their childcare, are met. (voluntary 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	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	EY465629
Local authority	Brent
Inspection number	955437
Type of provision	Full-time provision
Registration category	Childcare - Non-Domestic
Age range of children	0 - 8
Total number of places	24
Number of children on roll	25
Name of provider	Adeola Oluwatosin Amuludun
Date of previous inspection	not applicable
Telephone number	0207 6243373

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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.

The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) regulates and inspects to achieve excellence in the care of children and young people, and in education and skills for learners of all ages. It regulates and inspects childcare and children's social care, and inspects the Children and Family Court Advisory Support Service (Cafcass), schools, colleges, initial teacher training, work-based learning and skills training, adult and community learning, and education and training in prisons and other secure establishments. It assesses council children's services, and inspects services for looked after children, safeguarding and child protection.

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