

Ofsted  
Piccadilly Gate  
Store Street  
Manchester  
M1 2WD

**Telephone:** 0300 123 1231  
**Fax:** 0300 123 3159  
**Minicom:** 0161 618 8524  
**Email:** [enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk](mailto:enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk)  
**Web:** [www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk)



Fig Tree Day Nursery  
12 - 14 Mowbray Close  
Frankley  
Birmingham  
B45 0ES

Our Reference EY423162

Dear Synconium UK Ltd

### **Monitoring for provision judged as inadequate**

An Ofsted inspector, Esther Gray, monitored your provision on 06/05/2014 following your inspection where the provision was judged to be inadequate.

### **Outcome of monitoring**

As a result of our inspection on 28/02/2014, we sent you a welfare requirements notice. The actions you were set are included at the end of this letter.

To improve the quality of education and care for children you were required to: ensure that information is recorded about the vetting processes that have been completed for staff; this specifically refers to recording details of each member of staff's criminal records disclosure, reference number, the date a disclosure was obtained and details of who obtained it, ensure that practitioners, and any other person who is likely to have regular contact with children, are suitable; in particular apply for a new suitability check as soon as possible when allowing a person to start work using an existing check and carry out robust identity checks and vetting processes, ensure that a daily record is maintained of children's names and hours of attendance, including occasions when children are on outings, so that it is clear as to exactly which children are on the nursery premises at any given time and ensure that all staff have the appropriate training, skills and knowledge to help them understand and effectively carry out their individual and collective roles and responsibilities; this specifically relates to ensuring staff professional development needs are appropriately identified, supported, monitored and reviewed.

In addition to these actions, we issued a further notice to improve which required you to take action as follows: take appropriate steps to promote the good health of children by making sure that they are provided with daily outdoor activities (unless circumstances make this inappropriate, for example, unsafe weather conditions), improve communication with parents, outside professionals and local schools to ensure a shared understanding of children's needs, abilities and interests and to identify any areas where individual children may need additional support or

challenge, keep a written record of any complaints and their outcome; this specifically refers to ensuring that all complaints are recorded and these records clearly indicate what action was taken in response to individual complaints.

You were also required to: provide challenging and enjoyable experiences for children across all areas of learning and development; in particular improve the planning and implementation of experiences for the pre-school children to increase their engagement in experiences, skills in expressing themselves and their capacity to form relationships and improve children's independence and the quality of teaching across the areas of learning by; making sure that children have easy access to a wide range of stimulating resources which are relevant to their needs and interests, and effectively support their play.

Some of these actions were also repeated as they applied to the compulsory parts of the General Childcare Register.

On 3 April 2014 we carried out a monitoring visit and found that most aspects of the action required were either completed or underway. Although you had not yet received the full report to share with parents you had already taken steps to address the weaknesses in records of the daily hours of attendance for children. The improvement of the checking of staff that are newly recruited was well under way and the systems used have been revised and improved. The further steps to be taken to ensure that previously recruited staff records are updated and their on-going suitability is assured have since been advanced. During the monitoring visit carried out on 6 May 2014 it was found that all staff have been through a review of their suitability status. Some staff have been rechecked, however, not all the checks are yet returned.

It was found during a further monitoring visit carried out on 6 May 2014 that you have produced a training matrix which demonstrates graphical detail how you identify practitioners training needs and can spot any gaps following regular supervision and appraisal meetings. You also explained that this had led you to note that managing behaviour effectively was one of the missing elements that you now intend to follow up. Consequently, the actions identified as part of the welfare requirement notice are met. A further monitoring visit will be arranged to check the sustainability of the action taken and for completeness of checking suitability records once these are all returned, to safeguard children.

In addition to these actions some action has been taken at the first visit on 3 April 2014 to ensure children will benefit from fresh air and exercise on a rotational basis using the newly refurbished outdoor area. During the second monitoring visit on 6 May 2014 it was found that the outdoor area is well used and that children can use this area at any time and a member of staff has been recruited to support children's play whilst outdoors. There are some teething problems identified during the second visit in the use of the area and in the development of the use of the outdoor learning environment. There are evidently weaknesses in practitioner's understanding, and training of staff, as to how the outdoor area can be used to benefit children's

learning and development effectively. The practitioners observed in this area were less engaged in developing children's play and in stimulating children's interest through shared attention to what the children have chosen to play with than seen in activities and resources provided indoors. Practitioners explained that this was free choice rather than a focussed activity, when asked about the observed activity and the amount of staff engagement. This demonstrates how practitioners have not fully understood how to continue the planning and practice being developed whilst outdoors to promote children's learning and development effectively. Some practitioners were talking with children but the improvements being developed within the building have yet to extend to the outdoor area in terms of focussed activities outdoors. Some practitioners, however, in the pre-school room have taken a group of preschool age children out to the area on a bug hunt and those practitioners, spoken to, also felt that more could be done to timetable the use for learning activities rather than loosely using this as a free flow activity space. This view supported the inspector's observations of how the area was not being well used in support of teaching and learning.

During this second visit, the weakness in how the outdoor space was being used extended to the organisation of the daily routine, when children became overly wet and upset by not being changed quickly enough to dry clothing when taken indoors. The poor deployment of staff failed to take account of the changing of clothing effectively and caused a chaotic half hour just before lunch was served. The senior member of staff was inside caring for eight children singing with another member of staff whilst a less experienced member of staff with a student changed the three children being cared for with wet clothing, causing some children to become distressed as they waited too long before they got out of the wet clothing. Consequently, further review of the organisation of the daily routine and deployment of staff is required to ensure the wellbeing of children. A further action is issued in respect of this weakness as follows: ensure staffing arrangements meet the needs of all children and ensure their safety and wellbeing, particularly during times of transition from one room to another or one routine to the next.

There has been a timetabled parents evening to engage with parents and gather their thoughts on any improvements they would like to see. There remains, however, more work to be done to make connections with other professionals within the community to share information in order to provide for the individual needs of the children attending the nursery. You have taken the first steps in developing the improvements to the learning programme. Some areas of the nursery have been changed into separate rooms rather than free flow areas and the use of space is still under review with the support and advice of the local authority improvement advisory body.

Although prompt and effective action has been taken the next visit will be a monitoring visit to consider the further improvement required and sustainability of the improvements made so far, especially with regard to the aspects which require staff training and organisation of the daily routine in meeting children's needs.

Our Reference EY423162

Having considered all the evidence, the inspector is of the opinion that the setting has taken prompt and effective action to address the points for improvement.

**Next steps**

The next step will be further monitoring.

I hope that you have found the visit helpful in promoting improvement in your setting. If you have any further queries please contact us on the number at the top of this letter.

Yours sincerely

Nick Hudson  
National Director, Early Education

## Actions

Action	Due date	Closed date
increase children's independence and improve the quality of teaching across the areas of learning by making sure that children have easy access to a wide range of stimulating resources which are relevant to their needs and interests, and effectively support their play	28/03/2014	
ensure that the registered person, the manager of the later years provision and 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, has skills and experience suitable for the work, and is physically and mentally fit for the work (compulsory part of the Childcare Register)	04/03/2014	06/05/2014
take appropriate steps to promote the good health of children by making sure that they are provided with daily outdoor activities (unless circumstances make this inappropriate, for example, unsafe weather conditions)	04/03/2014	06/05/2014
ensure communication with parents, outside professionals and local schools is effective to develop a shared understanding of children's needs, abilities and interests and to identify any areas where individual children may need additional support or challenge	28/03/2014	
provide challenging and enjoyable experiences for children across all areas of learning and development; in particular improve the planning and implementation of experiences for the children to increase their engagement in experiences	14/03/2014	
keep a written record of any complaints and their outcome.	07/03/2014	06/05/2014
ensure that at least one person who is caring for children has an appropriate	04/03/2014	06/05/2014

first-aid qualification (compulsory part of the Childcare Register)

maintain an accurate daily record of the names of the children looked after on the premises and their hours of attendance (compulsory part of the Childcare Register)	04/03/2014	06/05/2014
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keep and make available to Ofsted a written record of all complaints in the previous three years and include the outcome of the investigation and the action the provider took in response (compulsory part of the Childcare Register).	07/03/2014	06/05/2014
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