

My First Word? grows up

Ditchling Road, BRIGHTON, BN1 6JG

Inspection date

05/06/2014

Previous inspection date

26/06/2013

The quality and standards of the early years provision

This inspection:

4

Previous inspection:

2

How well the early years provision meets the needs of the range of children who attend	3
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The quality and standards of the early years provision

This provision is inadequate

- The provider has not ensured that they employ a suitable manager or named deputy to work in the manager's absence. In addition, the nursery is operating without sufficient numbers of qualified staff. These failings put children at risk.
- Staff do not fully understand the procedure to be followed in the event of a safeguarding concern being raised, which compromises children's safety.
- The provider has failed to notify Ofsted of a change in circumstances, a temporary change of manager and a change in the age range of children being cared for. These failures to meet requirements compromise children's welfare and well-being.
- The systems to monitor the quality of teaching and how staff support children to learn and develop are not consistent to fully promote children's learning and development.
- Visitors to the nursery are not always monitored suitably to fully safeguard children.

It has the following strengths

- Parents praise the staff and say they are friendly, welcoming and approachable.

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 the indoor play area and the garden.
- The inspector carried out a joint observation of an activity with the nursery manager and the company area manager.
- The inspector spoke to a parent and looked at recent parent questionnaires to gather information regarding the parents' views of the nursery.
- The inspector sampled a range of documents, including staff recruitment and suitability records, safeguarding documents and children's development files.
- The inspector spoke to the nursery manager and the staff about their roles and responsibilities.

Inspector

Rebecca Swindells

Full report

Information about the setting

My First Word... Grows Up registered in 2013. It is privately owned and managed, and is one of two nurseries which are operated by the same provider. It operates from a building in a residential area of Brighton. There is one main playroom, an office, a kitchen and toilet facilities. There is a fully enclosed outdoor play area. There is a ramp into the building, although there are no toilet facilities for people with disabilities. There are currently 44 children on roll, 43 of whom are in the early years age group. The nursery is registered on the Early Years Register. It is open from Monday to Friday from 8am to 6pm for 50 weeks of the year. The nursery is in receipt of funding for children aged two, three and four. The nursery is able to provide care for children with special educational needs and/or disabilities, as well as those who speak English as an additional language. There are four staff who work with the children, of whom two have relevant childcare qualifications. The nursery is supported by the local authority advisory team.

What the setting needs to do to improve further

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

- ensure that all managers hold full and relevant Level 3 qualifications and have at least two years experience of working in an early years setting
- ensure that there are sufficient numbers of appropriately qualified staff working with children at all times
- ensure that there is a named deputy who is capable and qualified to take charge in the manager's absence
- ensure that all staff fully understand the safeguarding and welfare requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage, in particular the nursery's safeguarding policy and the reporting procedures, so that they can respond to safeguarding concerns in a timely and appropriate way
- monitor the quality of teaching and consistency of teaching practice in the staff team to improve outcomes for children.

To further improve the quality of the early years provision the provider should:

- improve the systems to monitor the security of the setting in relation to the presence of visitors to help promote children's safety.

Inspection judgements

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

Systems for ensuring that the nursery meets the needs of all children require improvement. Children are able to play either inside or in the garden. This means that children who prefer to learn outdoors are able to do so. Resources are accessible and children help themselves to the things that they need, which helps them to develop their independence. However, not all staff are sensitive to children's need to complete activities over a long period of time. For example, staff clear games away from tables in preparation for mealtimes when children are still enjoying playing with them. This means that although children make independent choices, staff do not always support these choices well. The nursery has a happy and sociable atmosphere because staff are cheerful and chat to children in a friendly way. As a result, children feel relaxed and play well together as they learn to share and take turns in their games.

The quality of teaching is variable and monitoring of staff teaching practice is not consistent, which has an impact on children's learning and development. Some staff are able to support children in their early literacy skills by helping them to link sounds to letters and to begin to be able to blend sounds together to make words. However, some staff lack the necessary knowledge of how children develop literacy skills and so are not able to provide support sufficiently well. Children enjoy reading and staff encourage their enjoyment by showing interest in the questions that children ask about things they see in their books.

Children show interest in the world around them and talk excitedly about the upcoming football World Cup. Some staff capture children's enthusiasm and take time to show them where the World Cup will take place and talk about the geography of Brazil. This involvement encourages the children to find out more and makes them eager to learn new facts. Other children enjoy exploring the natural world, and staff take care to remind them to have respect and consideration for the small insects that they find. This prepares children appropriately for their future lives.

Children enjoy imaginative play, being superheroes and tracking dinosaurs and dragons in the nursery garden. Staff remind them about the rules for play fighting so all children can enjoy the game equally. Children show that they can negotiate and apply their own rules in their games, and staff supervise the games sufficiently well. Sharing games like this helps children to develop their imaginations and helps them to learn to play cooperatively in a group.

Children develop satisfactory mathematical skills because they see numbers around them and some staff encourage them to talk about comparative sizes, positions and shapes as they play. Other staff do not engage in children's play so well and prefer instead to supervise games rather than involve themselves. As a result, they miss opportunities to support, extend and challenge children's thinking.

Staff plan activities for children that they know they will enjoy. Staff share information

together and listen to children's ideas to help them with future planning. This means that activities are relevant and children are happy and keen to involve themselves in them.

Observations of children are regular and cover all required areas of learning. The progress checks for two-year-old children are in place and meet requirements. Staff discuss their observations with the manager and plan with her what they are going to do next to help children make progress. However, the lack of suitably qualified staff means that not all children have a key person who is sufficiently knowledgeable to be able to make accurate assessments of children's learning needs. In addition, the manager's part-time working hours mean that there are not always staff present who are appropriately qualified and experienced to be able to support the unqualified staff. This means that not all children can progress well. The manager is responsible for supporting children with additional needs and she works appropriately with other professionals so these children make satisfactory progress.

Staff encourage parents to share what they know about their child so that they can plan activities that will interest them. Parents talk regularly to staff and are kept up to date with their child's progress through regular reports and meetings. Parents comment that they always feel welcome to talk to staff and this helps them to feel involved in what their child is doing.

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

Procedures for ensuring the well-being of children are inadequate. A key-person system is in place; however, there are insufficient numbers of suitably qualified staff to enable the system to be fully effective. Some key people lack the appropriate knowledge and experience to enable them to provide effective support for their key children. Parents do not always know who their child's key person is, but say that all staff talk to them about their child. Parents are happy with how staff look after their children at nursery. Parents comment that staff are 'warm, welcoming and approachable' and they feel confident to talk to staff about how their children are progressing.

Children move between the two play areas with confidence, demonstrating age-appropriate levels of independence. Staff provide healthy food for the children and encourage them to drink water throughout the day, which teaches them about keeping themselves healthy. Children enjoy playing in the garden, which helps to promote their physical development and well-being.

Staff are caring and gentle with children as they play. Behaviour is managed in a calm way and as a result the children are relaxed and considerate with one another. Staff encourage children to manage their own risk, such as by commenting to children about the suitability of their footwear for climbing. Procedures are in place for assessing risks at the nursery and daily health and safety checks help to keep children safe. The environment is secure with locked gates and there is a buzzer entry system. However, procedures for ensuring that all visitors are signed in to the nursery are not consistently followed, which compromises children's overall safety.

The manager is confident with her responsibilities regarding safeguarding. She has appropriate training and understands her role in protecting children. Other staff understand the signs and symptoms that would alert them to a safeguarding concern. However, they do not fully understand the reporting procedures they are required to follow in the event of a safeguarding concern being raised. This means children's safety is not adequately safeguarded at all times.

Staff liaise with Reception class teachers to prepare children for a smooth transition into school. The local authority provides transfer documents, which staff complete and share with parents when children leave the nursery. Children are suitably prepared for school because staff encourage them to have independent self-care skills. In addition, staff have group discussions to encourage children to talk about their feelings about going to school. This prepares children adequately for moving on to the next stage of their learning.

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

The inspection took place following information received that the provider had failed to inform Ofsted about a significant event that may affect the suitability of the early years provider. In addition, concerns were raised about the provider's understanding of the qualification requirements for managers of early years settings and about the provider's understanding of the learning and development requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage. The inspection found that not only did the provider fail to inform Ofsted about this significant event, but they also failed to inform Ofsted of a temporary change of manager. It is a requirement to do so. Furthermore, the provider has failed to ensure that the provision was registered on the compulsory part of the Childcare Register, as they care for older children at times. However, the risk to children is minimal and therefore Ofsted does not intend to take further action regarding the registration issue on this occasion.

The inspection found that there were insufficient numbers of qualified staff working with children and that although the nursery manager is confident, other staff do not fully understand the reporting procedures to be followed in the event of a safeguarding concern being raised. These are breaches of legal requirements for the Early Years Foundation Stage which compromise children's safety, welfare and well-being.

The manager works alongside staff and monitors the educational programme for the children. Staff provide activities to support all areas of learning and development and the manager ensures that children can access all areas inside the nursery and in the garden. The manager checks all assessment and development documents and consequently knows how individual children are progressing. The manager works with staff to plan activities to support children's development. However, the insufficient numbers of qualified staff and the manager's part-time working hours mean that support for children's development is inconsistent.

The manager recognises practice that is not good enough and uses some methods to tackle this. Staff work alongside the manager learning from her good practice, but some staff cannot sustain this good practice when working away from the manager. Without sufficient numbers of well-qualified staff, the impact of the manager's efforts is limited. Consequently, staff are not adequately supporting children at all times.

Recruitment and vetting procedures are robust and ensure that staff are suitable to work with children. This protects children effectively. However, not all staff understand the nursery safeguarding reporting procedures fully, which does not protect children well enough.

Staff talk together informally about the ways in which they could improve the nursery and they listen to parents' ideas and the views of the children. This means that regular changes and adaptations are made to try to improve the nursery. However, the lack of suitably qualified staff means that improvements to the quality of teaching do not happen quickly enough because some staff do not understand what they need to do.

The manager has made links with local schools and works confidently with other professionals to support children. This gives some support for children's individual needs. However, the manager works part time and only during school terms. In addition, there is no suitably qualified and experienced deputy to cover in her absence. Furthermore, there are insufficient numbers of qualified staff working with children, so consistent support for all children's learning and development cannot be guaranteed.

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	EY457966
Local authority	Brighton & Hove
Inspection number	973130
Type of provision	Full-time provision
Registration category	Childcare - Non-Domestic
Age range of children	2 - 6
Total number of places	26
Number of children on roll	44
Name of provider	My First Word Ltd
Date of previous inspection	26/06/2013
Telephone number	07825368974

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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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