

A.G.N.E.S Day Nursery Class 1

Bocking United Reformed Church, Church Hall, Church street, Bocking, BRAINTREE, Essex, CM7 5LH

Inspection date

07/10/2014

Previous inspection date

17/05/2012

The quality and standards of the early years provision

This inspection:

3

Previous inspection:

2

| | |
|--|---|
| 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

- The educational programme helps children make progress towards the early learning goals. They play with a wide range of engaging resources and equipment, and take part in activities covering all areas of learning, incorporating their ideas and interests.
- Children are generally happy, settled and show emotional bonds with the adults caring for them. They are kept safe and secure because staff understand their responsibilities in regard to safeguarding and child protection.
- Liaison with other early years settings attended by children is good, promoting a continuity of care and learning.

It is not yet good because

- Adult-imposed routines interrupt the flow of play and limit children's choices and decision making.
- The quality of teaching is variable because too little attention is paid by managers in monitoring and identifying areas needing improvement. As a result, some activities lack challenge and staff do not undertake the progress check for children between the ages of two and three years. Therefore, the reporting of children's progress is not consistent.
- Some routines do not consistently promote children's well-being, for example, children's individual need for rest and sleep, and the use of shared water for hand washing.

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 interacted with children in the main playroom and in the outside area.
- The inspector held discussions with the joint managers and other staff, and carried out a joint observation with a manager.
- The inspector viewed a sample of documentation, including evidence of staff suitability checks, some policies and children's development profiles.
- The inspector took account of the views of parents spoken to during the inspection.

Inspector

Sarah Williams

Full report

Information about the setting

A.G.N.E.S. Day Nursery registered in 2006 on the Early Years Register and both the compulsory and voluntary parts of the Childcare Register. It is managed by a group of trustees, including parents of some of the children who attend the nursery. The nursery operates from a church hall in the Bocking area of Braintree, Essex. Children share access to an enclosed outdoor play area. The nursery opens each weekday, from 8.30am to 4pm, for 46 weeks of the year. Children from the local and wider areas attend for a variety of sessions. There are currently 52 children on roll. The nursery supports children with special educational needs and/or disabilities and children who speak English as an additional language. Funded early education is provided for two-, three- and four-year-old children. There are eight members of staff, including two managers. All staff hold relevant early years qualifications, seven at level 3 and one at level 2.

What the setting needs to do to improve further

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

- reduce the adult-imposed routines, so that play sessions are uninterrupted and children have choice about playing indoors or outside, and about who they play with, to allow their creative thinking and decision-making skills to develop fully
- ensure that staff consistently assess children and carry out the progress check for children between the ages of two and three years, so that any gaps in children's development can be addressed
- introduce robust arrangements for supervision and monitoring of staff, to improve the overall quality of teaching and ensure that staff consistently provide challenging activities for children to maximise their learning potential.

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

- improve use of the premises and environment by ensuring that children are provided with suitable space to sleep or rest when they need to, and review procedures to ensure that children do not share water for hand washing.

Inspection judgements

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

The educational programme requires improvement. Children make progress towards the early learning goals and achieve some of the skills they need for the future, for example, school readiness. However, at times the flow of sessions is interrupted by adult-imposed routines. This limits children's opportunities for making choices and developing their creative thinking and decision-making skills. For example, snack time is organised as a whole group activity, which means children must stop their activities and tidy everything away before they have snack. Furthermore, staff limit outside play to half the group at any one time, so children have no choice about when they can use the outside area and which friends they play with at these times. The playroom is set out with a range of activities covering all areas of learning. Resources are rotated and changed throughout the day. Some activities are requested by children. Staff ask children what they would like and make a note on their plans to provide the resources during the following week's session. Some areas, such as the role-play areas indoors and outside, lack attention and are not always appealingly presented, so children do not choose to use them effectively to promote their imaginative play. For example, dolls clothes and dolls are stuffed into a toy cot, muddled and not easily accessible to children. Children engage enthusiastically with cars and vehicles at floor level. They use play dough to make snowmen and figures from a favourite cartoon film. Staff support children learning to use scissors and show them how to hold them correctly to be able to cut. A story session is lively, interactive, and links well to an activity where children collected autumn leaves on a walk in the local area. They examine the leaves with large magnifiers as they discuss the similarities and differences they find. Free use of pens and paper allows children to develop their fine-motor skills and practise making marks, which will help them with handwriting.

The quality of teaching is variable and therefore, is not consistently good. While younger children fare well by being allowed to explore and direct their own play, there is less challenge for the more able children. Some staff do not maximise the learning potential of the activities they are supervising. For example, staff do not always use their initiative to move to an area where children need them, or engage them by showing enthusiasm for the equipment they are supervising and suggesting ways that children can develop their ideas and problem-solving skills. Children's starting points are sought and parents complete an All about me form, which staff discuss with them. This enables staff to start to plan for children's next steps immediately. Observations and photographs help staff make assessments about children's progress. Tracking sheets are used to highlight any areas needing additional support to help children achieve within their expected levels. However, staff do not complete the progress check for children between the ages of two and three years and share the results with parents. Consequently, procedures to assess children's learning are inconsistent. Staff share children's learning journey records with parents, who are invited to make comments and talk about their child's progress with the key person. Additionally, a daily diary is used to keep parents informed. Parents also use the diary to comment about what their children do at home. This informs the planning for individual children and ensures that their interests are included every week.

Children are prepared for the next stage in learning, such as school. Staff provide more structured activities and promote children's independence as they approach their final term at the nursery. There are well-established links with feeder schools and staff welcome visits from children's prospective teachers, so that they can get to know them in advance. For children who attend other early years settings, the nursery initiates an

exchange of information. They use a link book, so that continuity of care is assured. Children who speak English as an additional language are supported to use some of their home language in their play, while developing their use of English. Children make good progress in their language and communication development because staff speak clearly to them, using language they can understand. For children with special educational needs and/or disabilities, staff work closely with outside professionals to ensure support and review the children's progress at regular intervals.

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

Children are happy and show a sense of belonging as they talk about what they enjoy at nursery and about their friends. They confidently move around the nursery and understand routines, following staff instructions and showing good behaviour. The simple house rules are reinforced at group circle times and because these are kept to a minimum, children find them simple to adhere to. The key-person system supports engagement with parents and promotes children's emotional well-being by helping them to form attachments and bonds. In most instances, this works very effectively and, as a result, children readily turn to adults for support and reassurance. However, occasionally, children's care needs are not fully met. For example, arrangements for the small number of children who need to sleep are slightly muddled. While staff wish to respect parents' wishes in keeping children awake, some children clearly need a sleep, so become fretful or distressed and have to be soothed by staff.

Children have food and drink supplied by parents. They show their independent skills, as they are able to select food from their own lunch boxes from an early age and eat their snack mid-session. Staff make sure that children with allergies or food intolerances do not have exposure to unsuitable foods and remind parents that there is a no nuts policy in place to protect certain children. Fresh drinking water is available at all times. Staff supervise children using the bathroom and attend to any children needing nappies changed with hygienic procedures. However, the hand washing routine does not fully promote children's good health because they sometimes share water when washing their hands, which risks the spread of germs. Children enjoy outdoor play every session. They are encouraged to bring boots and outdoor clothing, but the nursery has spares for any children who do not have their own. They ride on bikes and trikes and use low-level climbing and balancing equipment to promote their movement skills. In very bad weather, when outside play is not possible, there are activities, such as parachute games available, or children can dance inside.

Parents know who their child's key person is and this provides them with a point of contact throughout their child's attendance at nursery. They have informal discussions when they collect children. Parents comment that they feel reassured that their children are in good hands and, as a result, they recommend the nursery to friends and family. Parents say that all staff are approachable and that children report that they enjoy their time at nursery. The regular newsletters, which are attractive and contain useful information and updates, are distributed to all parents. There are also electronic means of keeping parents informed, for those who prefer to look online for the updates. Policies are

available electronically for any parent who wishes to view them, or they can see the hard copies available at the nursery. Parents, therefore, have a good understanding of how the nursery operates.

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

Leadership and management require improvement. Arrangements for the supervision of staff and for monitoring the quality of teaching are not robust enough to target weaker areas. As a result, the quality of teaching is variable and professional development is not fully promoted. The managers have not had an appraisal of their practice and lack the confidence to carry out effective appraisals for staff. They have kept up to date with mandatory training, such as the training for the designated person for safeguarding and first aid. However, other areas of knowledge, such as the progress check for children between the ages of two and three years, have fallen behind. This means that assessments of children's progress are inconsistent. The lack of monitoring of the quality of teaching means that activities are sometimes mundane and lack challenge, especially for children who are more able.

Children are safeguarded because staff have a sound understanding of the signs and symptoms of abuse. This is backed up by thorough and comprehensive policies and procedures, so any concerns can be referred without delay and appropriate action taken. Risk assessments cover all areas of the premises and activities. Security is very well managed and, consequently, no child can leave the premises unseen. All adults caring for children are subject to rigorous recruitment and induction procedures, to ensure their suitability to be in contact with children. Staff are well qualified and work well as a team.

Staff attempt to be reflective and evaluate sessions each week, however, the evaluations tend to be descriptive and do not focus on what can be improved for the future. The nursery has identified some areas for improvement within the curriculum. The managers are negotiating with the trustees, to purchase more equipment for the pre-school and organise training, to enable staff to move forward and make changes, which will affect outcomes for children. Parents' views are sought informally. Many of the comments they make in children's daily diaries are used to inform practice, as staff hold discussions and take parents' ideas forward to the team. For example, some parents requested homework for their children as they approach school age, so staff devised simple tasks that parents and children could share in preparation for them starting school.

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. We re-inspect nurseries and pre-schools judged as requires improvement within 12 months of the date of 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 | | There were no children present at the time of the inspection. The inspection judgement is that the provider continues to meet the requirements for registration. |
| Not met | | There were no children present at the time of the inspection. 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 | EY339356 |
| Local authority | Essex |
| Inspection number | 857181 |
| Type of provision | |
| Registration category | Childcare - Non-Domestic |
| Age range of children | 0 - 17 |
| Total number of places | 26 |
| Number of children on roll | 52 |
| Name of provider | A.G.N.E.S. Day Nursery |
| Date of previous inspection | 17/05/2012 |
| Telephone number | 07804 700557 |

Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the guidance '*Complaints procedure: raising concerns and making complaints about Ofsted*', which is available from Ofsted's website: www.ofsted.gov.uk. If you would like Ofsted to send you a copy of the guidance, please telephone 0300 123 4234, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.

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.

If you would like a copy of this document in a different format, such as large print or Braille, please telephone 0300 123 4234, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.

You may copy all or parts of this document for non-commercial educational purposes, as long as you give details of the source and date of publication and do not alter the information in any way.

To receive regular email alerts about new publications, including survey reports and school inspection reports, please visit our website and go to 'Subscribe'.

Piccadilly Gate
Store St
Manchester
M1 2WD

T: 0300 123 4234
Textphone: 0161 618 8524
E: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
W: www.ofsted.gov.uk

© Crown copyright 2012

