

The Children's Centre

Canterbury College, New Dover Road, Canterbury, Kent, CT1 3AJ



Inspection date

13 April 2015

Previous inspection date

12 December 2011

The quality and standards of the early years provision	This inspection:	Requires improvement	3
	Previous inspection:	Good	2
How well the early years provision meets the needs of the range of children who attend		Requires improvement	3
The contribution of the early years provision to the well-being of children		Requires improvement	3
The effectiveness of the leadership and management of the early years provision		Requires improvement	3
The setting does not meet legal requirements for early years settings			

Summary of key findings for parents

This provision requires improvement. It is not yet good because:

- Staff do not thoroughly risk assess all areas the children use or objects they may come into contact with, to keep them safe at all times.
- Staff do not always ensure that written permission from parents is taken before medicine is given to children. This does not always maintain children's well-being and safety.
- Staff do not always provide sufficient opportunities for children to see visual representations of numbers and written words in the outdoor area.
- At times, staff do not always ensure that children are consistently challenged in their learning. This means that children sometimes lose interest in the activities planned to develop their learning.

It has the following strengths

- The new nursery manager knows the actions and improvements she needs to make. Although in the post for only a short while, she has already made improvements. She has a detailed priority plan for further improvements, including developing the quality of the environment and increasing the knowledge of the staff, thereby driving the practice forward and improving the outcomes for children.
- Staff provide children with a range of good quality toys and resources which are easily available for them to make their own choices about their individual play.
- Staff are well trained in child protection and have a good understanding of how to recognise signs which may give rise to concerns. Management have a thorough system for checking that staff are suitable to care for children. This maintains children's safety and well-being.

What the setting needs to do to improve further

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

- review risk assessments to ensure they cover all areas and objects the children come into contact with, and that staff understand how to manage these effectively
- ensure all parents sign medication permission slips before the particular medicine is given.

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

- help children to recognise numbers and understand that words carry meaning by having written numbers and words in the outdoor area
- review activities to ensure all children are consistently challenged, particularly the more able older children.

Inspection activities

- The inspector observed activities and the quality of teaching indoors and outdoors.
- The inspector completed a joint observation with the nursery manager.
- The inspector sampled a range of documentation, including children's development records and key policies.
- The inspector took account of the parents' views through discussions.
- The inspector spoke to members of staff and children at appropriate times during the inspection and held a meeting with the management of the provision.

Inspector

Maxine Ansell

Inspection findings

How well the early years provision meets the needs of the range of children who attend. This requires improvement

Staff regularly use observations and assessments of children's play to plan activities, to enable them to make sound progress from their starting point. However, because the quality of teaching can be inconsistent, planned activities do not always challenge the children sufficiently. For example, children enjoyed playing with the corn flour and water mixture, and staff interacted positively with them. However, the activity did not increase the children's independence skills and there were no opportunities to extend the older children's learning. Staff provide opportunities for children to identify numbers and learn to recognise print indoors. However, these opportunities are not available in the outdoor area to enhance children's understanding that print carries meaning. Staff develop children's language and vocabulary as they label children's actions, for example, as they use trains to make marks in the shaving foam.

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

Children form strong relationships with their key person. Staff gather and exchange information about the individual children through their good relationship with parents. This enables them to understand each child as an individual and for them to settle quickly. Staff help children to learn about a healthy lifestyle as they talk about the healthy lunches the nursery provide. Staff discuss with parents any prescribed medication they are required to administer. However, occasionally the staff do not always obtain the required signature on the permission forms, therefore, breaching a legal requirement. Staff model good behaviour and use age-appropriate strategies to encourage children to turn take. As a result, with limited encouragement, children behave appropriately. Staff have good links with the local college and children regularly visit their library and animal centre. This enables them to develop confidence and independence skills needed for future learning.

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

The provider has not informed Ofsted of changes to management and the premises within the required time. However, these changes do not impact on the children's safety and well-being, and on this occasion Ofsted will not be taking any further action. The manager and staff demonstrate a reasonable understanding of their responsibilities to safeguarding children while in their care. However, they do not always complete a robust risk assessment. Staff are not always consistently alert to all potential problems to ensure they maintain the children's safety at all times. The manager is implementing an effective system to conduct supervision and induction meetings, allowing her to develop a focused training plan to improve individual practitioner's knowledge and improve their interactions with the children. The nursery has good relationships with external agencies to discuss, identify and obtain support for children's special educational needs.

Setting details

Unique reference number	127100
Local authority	Kent
Inspection number	840610
Type of provision	Full-time provision
Registration category	Childcare - Non-Domestic
Age range of children	0 - 5
Total number of places	24
Number of children on roll	43
Name of provider	Canterbury College Governing Body
Date of previous inspection	12 December 2011
Telephone number	01227 811108

The Children's Centre operates in the grounds of Canterbury College. The nursery prioritises places for students and staff attending the college, and any remaining places are allocated to the public. The provider employs six members of staff who work directly with children, all of whom are qualified; one is qualified to Level 5, one to Level 4, two to Level 3 and two apprentices are qualified to Level 2. There is also a part-time kitchen assistant. The setting supports children with special educational needs and/or disabilities and pupils who speak an additional language. The provider is in receipt of funding for the provision of free early years education for two-, three-, and four-year-old children.

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