

The Cottage Nursery

Alexander Hall, Faringdon Road, Watchfield, Nr Swindon, Wiltshire, SN6 8TS



Inspection date	26 June 2017
Previous inspection date	26 January 2017

The quality and standards of the early years provision	This inspection:	Requires improvement	3
	Previous inspection:	Inadequate	4
Effectiveness of the leadership and management		Requires improvement	3
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment		Requires improvement	3
Personal development, behaviour and welfare		Requires improvement	3
Outcomes for children		Requires improvement	3

Summary of key findings for parents

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

- Managers are not fully effective in monitoring and coaching staff, and the quality of teaching is not consistently strong. This weakness prevents some groups of children, including the most able children, from making consistently good progress.
- Managers do not have an effective overview of how well groups of children in the setting are progressing. They do not provide effective support for children who are at risk of falling behind in their learning to catch up quickly enough.
- Staff do not target their teaching effectively to help children reach the next stage in their learning quickly. They do not consistently provide a suitable level of challenge, and opportunities to extend children's learning further are being missed.

It has the following strengths

- Managers have taken action to address weaknesses identified at the last inspection. Some of these changes are not fully embedded and require further improvements. Self-evaluation is ongoing and staff are aware of what they need to do next.
- Staff know the children well and develop warm relationships with them, which supports children's emotional needs well, overall.
- Managers establish positive partnerships with parents. Parents say that they feel well informed and included by staff. For example, the recent introduction of 'wow' cards encourages parents to contribute to their children's assessment records.

What the setting needs to do to improve further

To meet the requirements of the early years foundation stage the provider must:

	Due Date
■ build further on the programme for staff's professional development to improve their teaching skills and to ensure they all have high expectations of what children can achieve, especially in their personal development	25/09/2017
■ monitor the educational programmes more precisely and take swift action to target weaker aspects of learning to support all children to make good or better progress.	25/09/2017

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

- provide activities that challenge older children's thinking and that further stimulate and extend their interest in exploring and learning.

Inspection activities

- The inspectors observed the quality of teaching during activities indoors and outdoors and assessed the impact this has on children's learning.
- The inspectors spoke with staff and children during the inspection.
- The inspectors completed several joint observations of teaching with the manager.
- The inspectors held several meetings with the management team.
- The inspectors spoke to parents during the inspection and took account of their views.

Inspector

Melissa Cox

Inspection findings

Effectiveness of the leadership and management requires improvement

Managers have introduced supervision and training opportunities for staff and, although weaknesses in teaching remain, practice is steadily improving. Managers work closely with the local authority and others to monitor children's learning and improve the quality of the provision further. Staff implement new ideas from training with mixed success. For example, they support older children to link letter sounds to objects during a group game, but model the letter sounds incorrectly. Safeguarding is effective. Staff recognise the signs that may indicate a child is at risk of extreme religious views. They know where to go if they are concerned about a child's welfare or the behaviour of another adult. Risk assessment procedures have improved and support a safe environment. Managers maintain regular suitability checks on staff. They work in partnership with parents and gather required information from them, such as parental permission.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment requires improvement

Staff do not show a strong enough understanding of how to promote children's good progress. They do not encourage children to develop their own ideas and think through problems. For example, staff do not challenge older children in their mathematics when they show an interest in comparing how tall their sunflower plants have grown. Where teaching is better, staff engage in meaningful conversations with children and this helps develop their language skills. For example, when children find a spider in the sand, staff and children sing a rhyme about a spider together. Staff observe children as they play and have a general overview of their development. However, they do not target their teaching effectively to swiftly address the gaps in children's learning.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare require improvement

Children are settled and play happily alongside staff, although weaknesses in teaching sometimes affect children's motivation to learn. Children have opportunities to develop their physical skills. For example, babies and toddlers enjoy digging in the sand and riding bicycles down slopes. Older children take risks as they climb and balance on equipment. Staff give children clear safety messages so that they begin to keep themselves and each other safe. However, staff do not do enough to develop some older children's self-care skills, such as toileting, to prepare them for their move to school.

Outcomes for children require improvement

Due to weaknesses in the quality of teaching, children are not making the best possible progress. Some older children write their names and use number language in their play. Younger children gain some basic skills, for example, they learn to count as they sing number rhymes. Children behave well and follow simple rules. However, teaching does not sufficiently challenge children. Staff do not consistently support all children to make their needs known and to join in activities in readiness for school.

Setting details

Unique reference number	EY381532
Local authority	Oxfordshire
Inspection number	1083970
Type of provision	Full-time provision
Day care type	Childcare - Non-Domestic
Registers	Early Years Register, Compulsory Childcare Register, Voluntary Childcare Register
Age range of children	0 - 5
Total number of places	150
Number of children on roll	89
Name of registered person	The Cottage Nursery
Registered person unique reference number	RP528490
Date of previous inspection	26 January 2017
Telephone number	01793 314461

The Cottage Nursery re-registered in 2008. The nursery operates from premises in Watchfield, near Faringdon on the Wiltshire/Oxfordshire border. The nursery opens on weekdays, from 8am to 6pm, for 50 weeks a year. The nursery is in receipt of funding for the provision of free early education for children aged two, three and four years. A team of 24 staff is employed, of whom 20 hold a suitable childcare qualification.

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