

Skylarks Nursery School

Lower Mead Farm, Alston Cross, Newton Abbot, TQ13 7LJ



Inspection date

15 March 2018

Previous inspection date

Not applicable

| The quality and standards of the early years provision | This inspection: | Requires improvement | 3 |
|--|----------------------|----------------------|---|
| | Previous inspection: | Not applicable | |
| Effectiveness of the leadership and management | | Requires improvement | 3 |
| Quality of teaching, learning and assessment | | Good | 2 |
| Personal development, behaviour and welfare | | Requires improvement | 3 |
| Outcomes for children | | Good | 2 |

Summary of key findings for parents

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

- Although the provider carries out risk assessments, these are not fully effective. Older children who attend a setting that operates on the same premises can freely access the nursery. At times, this has a negative impact on the safety of the nursery children.
- Some group activities are not always organised well enough to support the younger children. Sometimes, the activities are lengthy and not matched to each child's stage of development. This results in the children losing interest.
- The manager does not support staff as well possible to adapt their practice to better meet the needs of younger children.

It has the following strengths

- Staff know the children well. They use every opportunity to support children's growing independence.
- Staff work well with parents. This ensures that children receive support in the next steps of their learning. Parents speak highly of the nursery and comment on the improvement in their children's confidence.
- Children play with energy and excitement. They enjoy outdoor play experiences and learn about the world around them.
- The environment is spacious, with a good range of resources. Children choose and access what they want to do throughout the day.

What the setting needs to do to improve further

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

Due Date

- | | |
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| ■ improve risk assessments and take all reasonable steps to ensure that the children are not exposed to risks from other users of the setting. | 27/04/2018 |
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To further improve the quality of the early years provision the provider should:

- develop planning for group activities to ensure that they are pitched at the correct level for the youngest children
- support staff in meeting the needs of the younger children more effectively.

Inspection activities

- The inspector observed activities in the playrooms and the outdoor environment, and undertook a joint observation with the manager.
- The inspector took account of the views of parents spoken to on the day of inspection.
- The inspector sampled documentation relating to welfare requirements and children's progress.
- The inspector spoke to and took account of the views of some of the older children who attend the setting.
- The inspector spoke to the manager and staff at appropriate times throughout the day.

Inspector

Sarah Warne

Inspection findings

Effectiveness of the leadership and management requires improvement

The manager has a good overview of all children's progress and, overall, works well with staff who present children with a wide range of activities. The manager undertakes staff supervision and supports them in their professional development. For example, staff undertake training to gain recognised qualifications and improve outcomes for children. However, the manager does not support staff well enough to adapt activities for the younger children. Safeguarding is effective. The manager and staff know the procedure to follow should they suspect a child is at risk of harm. Overall, staff supervise children well to support their safety. However, on the day of inspection, older children from another provision on the premises came into the nursery unsupervised and were behaving inappropriately. This made nursery children feel unsettled. The manager had not considered any potential risks to other users as part of effective risk-assessing processes to ensure children's safety at all times.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment is good

Staff model language well. They ask questions and allow children the time to think and respond. Children enjoy varied activities that encourage their natural eagerness for learning. For example, children quickly become involved in a storytelling session. They use their imagination and physical movement to immerse themselves in the story. At times, group activities run for a considerable time and some younger children lose focus. Staff encourage children to explore the natural environment. For example, children gain first-hand experiences of the life cycle of frogs and chickens. They record daily observations and speculate on the changes that will happen. Staff provide children with a wide variety of resources. Children join things together and build structures. For example, younger children enjoy building towers using graduated construction blocks.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare require improvement

Staff offer flexible settling-in routines, which ensure that children feel secure and settled. Snack times support children's social skills. For example, children bring a piece of fruit to nursery each morning. Staff and children cut the fruit together and talk about sharing it among others in the nursery. All children get their own cup and plate, and pour their own drink. Children behave well. Staff observe children and help them manage minor conflicts. However, there are times when younger children observe older children who use the same premises using poor behaviour and conduct. The nursery children sometimes feel worried about what they see.

Outcomes for children are good

All children make good progress from when they first start. Children develop the skills they need to be ready for school. For example, they learn to count and recognise numbers. They make marks, form letters and learn how to write their name. They are imaginative and take part in creative activities with enthusiasm.

Setting details

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| Unique reference number | EY494722 |
| Local authority | Devon |
| Inspection number | 1035648 |
| Type of provision | Sessional provision |
| Day care type | Childcare - Non-Domestic |
| Registers | Early Years Register, Compulsory Childcare Register, Voluntary Childcare Register |
| Age range of children | 2 - 5 |
| Total number of places | 44 |
| Number of children on roll | 50 |
| Name of registered person | Felicity Jane Marshall |
| Registered person unique reference number | RP901314 |
| Date of previous inspection | Not applicable |
| Telephone number | 01364 72020 |

Skylarks Nursery School registered in 2015. The nursery is located in Ashburton, Devon. The nursery is open from 8.30am to 4pm on Monday to Thursday, and on Friday from 9am to 3.30pm, during school terms. The nursery follows the Montessori approach to learning. The nursery receives funding for the provision of free early education places for children aged two, three and four years. There are nine staff who work with the children, including the manager. Of these, five hold a childcare qualification at levels 2 and 3.

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