

Inspection date	24 May 2018
Previous inspection date	11 October 2016

The quality and standards of the early years provision	This inspection:	Requires improvement	3
	Previous inspection:	Good	2
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:

- The quality of teaching is variable within the nursery. Staff do not consistently provide experiences that are appropriate to individual children's age and stage of development. As a result, children do not always make the best possible progress in their learning.
- Planning and assessment are not fully developed to reflect consistently the individual needs of all children attending the nursery and monitor their progress.
- Systems for the effective monitoring and supervision of staff are not fully developed. As a result, the management team does not fully support continued professional development by identifying the training and support needs of staff.
- At times, information sharing is not sufficient to support children fully when their key person is absent.

It has the following strengths

- Children are generally settled, happy and enjoy their time at the nursery. They build positive relationships with the staff and are developing friendships with each other.
- Records, policies and procedures required for the safe management of the provision are well maintained and implemented.
- Children behave well. Staff use appropriate strategies to manage behaviour and to encourage children to be kind and to respect each other.

What the setting needs to do to improve further

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

	Due Date
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ ensure that observation, assessment and planning for children is focused on their interests and next steps for learning, so that all children are effectively supported to make good progress, given their age, abilities and starting points 	20/06/2018
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ improve teaching strategies to ensure that staff consistently provide children with appropriate levels of challenge in line with their current stage of development 	20/06/2018
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ improve support provided to all staff to ensure that they are sufficiently skilled and knowledgeable, and that they have a clear understanding of their roles and responsibilities to enable them consistently to deliver the best possible outcomes for all children. 	20/06/2018

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

- develop the key-person system in order to maintain consistent support for children when their key-person is new to the role or not present.

Inspection activities

- The inspector spoke to children and staff at appropriate times during the inspection.
- The inspector observed the quality of teaching during activities indoors and outdoors, and assessed the impact this has on children's learning.
- The inspector held meetings with the provider, nursery operations manager and nursery manager. They looked at relevant documentation and evidence of the suitability of staff working in the nursery.
- The inspector completed joint observations of teaching activities with the operations manager and the nursery manager.
- The inspector spoke to a number of parents during the inspection and took account of their views.

Inspector

Jemma Hudson

Inspection findings

Effectiveness of the leadership and management requires improvement

Although the management team has implemented some systems to monitor staff performance, these are not rigorous enough to support staff to improve their knowledge and the quality of their teaching. However, the provider and management team are developing a generally accurate overview of the effectiveness of the nursery. They demonstrate a positive desire to improve the overall quality of teaching and the achievements of all children. Safeguarding is effective. Staff are suitably trained in safeguarding matters and are able to discuss the procedures they would follow if they had concerns about a child's welfare. Staff supervise children effectively and promote their safety. The manager ensures the staff-to-child ratios are correct each day and has appropriate systems in place to record any accidents that may occur. She ensures parents know the procedures to follow if they wish to make a complaint about the nursery. Feedback from parents is positive. They say that their children are happy and settled.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment requires improvement

The quality of teaching is variable. Overall, staff recognise that children learn through play and generally support them appropriately so that they make some progress in their learning. Staff observe children and have a general overview of their development. However, they do not always effectively use this information to monitor and track children's progress against all areas of their development. Consequently, the planning of activities is not always focused on children's precise learning needs. In spite of these weaknesses, children enjoy their time at the nursery and access a range of resources, both indoors and outside.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare require improvement

A key-person system is in place to help children build relationships with their special member of staff. However, information is not consistently shared to ensure continuity of care for every child when their key person is absent or very new to the role. Staff provide children with opportunities to learn about the importance of healthy lifestyles. They talk about the food that is good for them at mealtimes. Children know about handwashing before meals and show good levels of independence, relevant to their different stages of development. For example, children are beginning to manage their own self-care, such as toileting. Staff promote children's physical health and well-being effectively. The premises are safe, clean and suitable. The well-resourced rooms provide space and opportunity for children to engage in a range of activities.

Outcomes for children require improvement

Most children at the nursery appear to be working comfortably within the range of development typical for their age. They are developing some of the key skills needed for the next stage in their learning. However, weaknesses in the teaching and assessment processes mean that staff do not fully support all children to make good progress.

Setting details

Unique reference number	EY346623
Local authority	Essex
Inspection number	1136482
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 - 11
Total number of places	120
Number of children on roll	205
Name of registered person	Clever Tots Limited
Registered person unique reference number	RP526730
Date of previous inspection	11 October 2016
Telephone number	01277 849 681

Clever Tots opened in 2007. It is one of four settings privately run and managed by the same owners. The nursery employs 30 members of childcare staff. Of these, 27 staff have appropriate childcare qualifications ranging from level 2 to level 6. The nursery opens Monday to Friday, all year round. Sessions are from 7am until 7pm. The nursery provides funded early education for two-, three- and four-year-old children.

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