

Axstane House Nursery

Axstane House, Hever Road, Sevenoaks, Kent TN15 6HD



Inspection date	9 August 2018
Previous inspection date	Not applicable

The quality and standards of the early years provision	This inspection: Previous inspection:	Inadequate Not applicable	4
Effectiveness of leadership and management		Inadequate	4
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment		Inadequate	4
Personal development, behaviour and welfare		Inadequate	4
Outcomes for children		Inadequate	4

Summary of key findings for parents

The provision is inadequate

- The provider has failed to implement a thorough recruitment and vetting process for new staff to ensure they are suitable to work with children. This places children at risk.
- The provider has failed to risk assess all aspects of the provision sufficiently. She has not instilled a culture of safety or taken all reasonable steps to ensure the safety of children in the case of a fire or emergency.
- The provider does not ensure that staff are deployed effectively. Consequently, staff are unable to fully assess, monitor or support children's individual care and learning needs.
- An ineffective key-person system means that children's social and emotional needs are not being met. For example, staff have not prepared children for, or informed parents of, the vast changes happening in the setting. This is having a negative impact on children's confidence and well-being.
- The provider has not implemented an effective programme of support and professional development for staff to raise the quality of their teaching and practice.
- Inadequate arrangements for supporting all children who have special educational needs (SEN) result in their individual needs not being met and poor levels of progress.
- Staff do not consistently organise aspects of the provision, such as mealtimes, well. This means that the routine becomes chaotic and children's good health is not adequately supported.
- The quality of staff interactions with children is variable. For example, staff do not consistently provide children with meaningful play and learning opportunities.

It has the following strengths

- Children have access to appropriate resources which interest them.

What the setting needs to do to improve further

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

	Due date
implement effective recruitment and vetting systems, to ensure all adults who have regular contact with the children are suitable	29/09/2018
improve the risk assessment process to ensure all risks to children's safety are effectively minimised	29/09/2018
implement effective procedures to ensure the safety of children in the case of fire or other emergency	29/09/2018
improve the arrangements for staff deployment, to ensure children's care and learning needs are consistently met throughout the day	29/09/2018
implement an effective key-person system to meet every child's learning and care needs and to offer a settled relationship, including at times of change and transition	29/09/2018
implement effective arrangements for the supervision of staff and provide appropriate support, mentoring and coaching to raise the quality of teaching and improve outcomes for children	29/09/2018
provide swift, targeted support for children who have special educational needs (SEN), to ensure they have every opportunity to progress well	29/09/2018
ensure information about the setting, especially in regards to staff changes and changes to children's key persons, is shared with all parents, and enable them to contribute to and support their children's learning.	29/09/2018
improve care and hygiene practices to ensure children's health and well-being are effectively promoted	29/09/2018
improve the quality of teaching, to ensure interactions are tailored to meet children's individual learning needs and that activities offer suitable challenge, to help each child make progress in all areas of learning	29/09/2018
implement an effective system of observation and assessment to monitor children's progress accurately, to ensure their next steps in learning can be identified and supported.	29/09/2018

Inspection activities

- The inspector spoke to the acting manager and special educational needs coordinator at relevant times throughout the inspection.
- The inspector observed interactions between the staff and children in the inside space and the outside environment.
- The inspector gained feedback from parents and children and considered their views.
- The inspector viewed a range of documentation, including children's development records and staff information.
- This inspection took place following the risk assessment process.

Inspector

Amanda Vidler

Inspection findings

Effectiveness of leadership and management is inadequate

Arrangements for safeguarding are ineffective. The provider, who is also acting manager, does not consistently follow a rigorous recruitment process when employing new staff. For example, she does not gain references from previous employers to help her establish applicants' suitability. However, staff do have knowledge and understanding of current safeguarding issues and requirements, and of the relevant procedures to follow if they have any concerns. The provider does not risk assess thoroughly to maintain a safe environment for children. For example, at times, the front entrance is not secure and the provider has failed to identify the risk of a child leaving the premises unsupervised. On other occasions, staff carry hot drinks around the setting, which places children at significant risk of scalding. The provider does not comply with the requirements for fire safety. She has not recognised the risk of a locked main fire exit without a readily available key. To open the door, a suitable key has to be obtained from elsewhere in the building. This means that the exit route is not easily accessible in the event of an emergency evacuation. The provider does not take into account the diverse needs of the children attending when deploying staff across the setting. For periods of the day, staff are overstretched. They are unable to take time to interact with children or give good levels of care and support. For example, the provider has not recognised the potential risks posed when young children sleep in the cot room and are out of sight and hearing of staff. The provider does not give staff effective support and mentoring to help them become confident in their roles and to raise the quality of their teaching. Staff have started to attend some training courses but, as yet, these have not had a significant impact on improving outcomes for children.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment is inadequate

The poor deployment of staff has a significant impact on their ability to support children's learning consistently. For example, staff are sometimes left alone in rooms with children and frequently have to call out to staff in other rooms for support. This means that staff are constantly being pulled away from the children in their care. When staff are able to involve themselves in children's play, the level of support given to children is inconsistent across the staff team. Group activities are chaotic and poorly planned. For example, a large group of children are squeezed around a small table to help make slime. Staff try to get all children involved, by passing the limited resources around the table. However, this takes a considerable amount of time, meaning children become distracted and leave the table. There are occasions when some staff do interact with children in ways that promote aspects of their learning. For example, staff use questions to encourage children to talk about their drawings. They listen and extend children's ideas, linking these to real-life situations. Staff complete some observations of children's achievements and learning. However, staff are not working with their key children as they are deployed in different rooms. This means that no one is consistently planning suitably for children's ongoing progress. The newly introduced monitoring process is not embedded in practice and is therefore not used to track all children's progression sufficiently. Staff have recognised gaps in development and identified some children who need extra support. However, the arrangements for supporting these children are inadequate. The SEN coordinator is not confident in her role or the processes she needs to follow to get support for children. Therefore, gaps in children's

development are not addressed swiftly.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare are inadequate

The significant weaknesses in leadership and management mean children's care and well-being needs are not met. Insufficient staffing arrangements mean the supervision of children is inadequate. For example, older children who need extra support on arrival are placed in the room with younger children. There are no appropriate resources to meet their individual needs and therefore they just wander around the room. The one staff member present is already stretched caring for the two babies in her care. There have been, and continue to be, a number of changes across the setting. For example, the setting has a new owner and there have been a number of management and staff changes in a short period. The owner has also embarked on a programme of refurbishment, so some rooms have been out of operation. Staff have been moved around regularly to different rooms. Furthermore, children's key persons have been changed and not all parents have been informed. Some do not know who their child's current key person is and they have are unaware of staff leaving or new staff starting. Parents are unsure whom they should talk to, to enable them to contribute fully to their children's care and learning. The considerable changes have had a negative effect on children's emotional well-being. Parents comment that previously confident children are now unsure when arriving at the setting. Overall, children do behave well. However, mealtimes are chaotic. With poor staff support, some children lose interest quickly and leave the table to play, which disrupts other children. Children's hygiene needs are not met. Staff do not consider the risks of cross-contamination and take steps to prevent the spread of infection. For example, staff retrieve cups from the floor and return them to the children. At times, children eat from their knives and the serving spoon, which is then used by other children.

Outcomes for children are inadequate

Children do not make adequate progress in their learning and development. Gaps in children's learning are not effectively addressed and, on occasions, they start to widen. Children acquire some skills that help to prepare them for the next stage in their learning. For example, young children show early walking skills as they pull themselves up and start to take cautious steps. However, staff fail to recognise opportunities to extend children's learning in their play and match their teaching to children's individual needs. Children develop some independence. For example, older children know to ask the staff when they want to use the bathroom on their own. However, children do not develop key skills needed to prepare them for the move on to school.

Setting details

Unique reference number	EY551378
Local authority	Kent
Inspection number	10056929
Type of provision	Full day care
Registers	Early Years Register, Compulsory Childcare Register, Voluntary Childcare Register
Day care type	
Age range of children	1 - 4
Total number of places	42
Number of children on roll	28
Name of registered person	Benfield, Thembelihle
Registered person unique reference number	RP551377
Date of previous inspection	Not applicable
Telephone number	01474852225

Axstane House Nursery registered in 2017. It is located in Sevenoaks, Kent. The nursery opens Monday to Friday from 8am to 6pm, all year round, with the exception of bank holidays and the week between Christmas and New Year. The nursery provides funded early education for children aged two, three and four years. There are eight members of staff, three of whom have childcare qualifications at level 3, and the provider is a qualified teacher.

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