

Day Nursery & Afterschool Club

41 Wilbury Way, Hitchin SG4 0TW



Inspection date	20 June 2019
Previous inspection date	22 March 2019

The quality and standards of the early years provision	This inspection:	Inadequate	4
	Previous inspection:	Inadequate	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

This provision is inadequate

- The setting is inadequate for the third time. Provision is extremely poor and has deteriorated further since the last inspection. The provider has failed to meet a welfare requirement notice served at a previous visit. Children may be at risk of harm. We have suspended the registration of the nursery for six weeks.
- The provider fails to ensure that staff understand their roles or meet children's needs. Half the staff present on the day of inspection have not had an induction. They do not know children's names or how to support them. Children's behaviour makes them and others unsafe. Staff do not intervene to remove risks, or maintain a safe environment to protect children.
- Children's safety is not assured. The provider has failed to ensure that staff understand child protection matters. Some staff do not know how to refer concerns and cannot identify signs or symptoms of abuse. Documents, including children's records, are not maintained. Staff struggle to contact parents or carers in an emergency.
- The provider has failed to maintain a stable staff team. The key-person system is ineffective. Some children have had multiple changes of key person since the last inspection. Children, including babies, are poorly settled and are often distressed.
- Children are still not receiving the education and care they are entitled to. Their progress is poor as a result of inadequate teaching. Several children are at risk of falling behind their peers. This includes children with special educational needs and/or disabilities. Staff do not occupy children's interests. Children's behaviour is unsafe.
- The provider has knowingly allowed staff to transport children without required car seats. This places children at risk of harm.

It has the following strengths

- Children follow appropriate hygiene routines to protect their health.

What the setting needs to do to improve further

The provision is inadequate and Ofsted intends to take enforcement action:

We intend to take steps to suspend registration and will issue a Welfare Requirements Notice requiring the provider to:

	Due date
implement the procedure for responding to children who are ill or infectious, take necessary steps to prevent the spread of infection, and take appropriate action if children are ill	15/07/2019
implement a policy and procedures in line with Local Safeguarding Children Board requirements and train all staff to understand this policy to ensure that staff can identify and report concerns about children without delay	15/07/2019
ensure that staffing arrangements meet children's needs and ensure their safety	15/07/2019
ensure that staff manage children's behaviour in appropriate ways, with specific regard to ensuring all staff who work with children are able to identify and manage children's behaviour when it places themselves and others at risk of harm	15/07/2019
train all staff, including those new to the setting or working with children on a temporary basis, to understand their roles and responsibilities and to know what is expected of them to meet children's needs	15/07/2019
ensure that staff are able to assess risks to children and to take action to remove or minimise such risks, with specific regard to staff transporting children to and from school, and to the management of unsafe behaviour in the pre-school room	15/07/2019
ensure that an accurate record of parents' contact details for all children cared for by the setting is kept so that staff can contact parents in the case of an emergency	15/07/2019
ensure that all spaces used by children are safe and suitable for their use, with specific regard to making sure that floor spaces in the pre-school room are kept free from trip and slip hazards	15/07/2019
implement effective systems to meet the needs of children with special education needs and/or disabilities, with specific regard to making sure that any adults caring for them know and can meet their needs	15/07/2019
provide each child with a key person who is able to offer a settled relationship for that child and to tailor their care to their individual needs.	15/07/2019

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

	Due date
ensure that staff consider the individual needs, interests and stage of development of each child in their care, and use this information to plan a challenging and enjoyable experiences for each child in all of the areas of learning and development	15/07/2019
ensure that staff observe children to understand their level of achievement, interests and learning styles, and use this information to shape learning experiences for each child, to recognise children's progress and to identify and tackle any gaps in their progress	15/07/2019
ensure that each area of learning and development is implemented through planned, purposeful play and through a mix of adult-led and child-initiated activity, to support children to make good progress and to be ready for their next stage in learning.	15/07/2019

Inspection activities

- We carried out this inspection as a result of a risk assessment, following information we received about the provider.
- The inspector observed staff and children in rooms across the nursery. She spoke to staff and children at appropriate times during the inspection.
- The inspector spoke to parents during the inspection.
- The inspector observed practice in the pre-school room with the deputy manager of the setting.
- The inspector reviewed available documentation, including information on staff suitability and records of accidents in the setting.
- The inspector spoke to the provider on the phone during the inspection.

Inspector

Naomi Brown

Inspection findings

Effectiveness of leadership and management is inadequate

Safeguarding is not effective. Children are at risk of harm in the nursery and when being transported to and from school. Leadership arrangements are chaotic. Leaders and managers are overloaded with domestic tasks, leaving them with no time to focus on staff development or monitor the quality of staff practice. Many practitioners have left since the last inspection and the provider has taken on a large number of temporary staff to meet staff-to-child ratio requirements. However, she has taken no steps to assess their understanding, including that of child protection matters. Some staff are unable to demonstrate how to take steps to recognise and refer concerns about children in their care. This places children at risk in the case of a safeguarding concern or allegation. Temporary staff, who made up half of adults working with children on the day of inspection, do not know many of the children's names. They do not know their needs and do not know what is planned for them on the day of inspection. This undermines children's safety and well-being. Supervision arrangements are poor and the provider has taken no effective steps since the last inspection to improve the knowledge and skills of the staff, or to provide them with adequate support to carry out their jobs. Despite much involvement from outside agencies and Ofsted, the provider has failed to make or sustain meaningful improvements. Many breaches of requirements are repeated. Previously a welfare requirement notice was issued in relation to staff not implementing the medication policy correctly. However, staff still are unsure of the policy in relation to managing children with high temperatures.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment is inadequate

The quality of teaching is inadequate. Staffing arrangements are chaotic and staff have little time to focus on teaching children or planning and providing meaningful activities. The quality of interaction in the baby room has sharply declined since the last inspection as permanent staff have left and not been replaced. For example, babies are poorly occupied and are cared for by staff who do not know their development needs. Staff occasionally sing songs to babies and encourage them to look at some puppets but do not support their development through planned, purposeful play effectively. Children in the pre-school room have few activities that engage their interests. Staff provide basic resources that cover some areas of learning, for example a whiteboard where children can practise writing their names. However, this is not supervised well by staff and they do not encourage children to concentrate on the activity. Some children take part in cutting and sticking activities but later rip up pieces of paper and throw them on the floor. Staff are unable to sustain children's interests in this room. Therefore, children are not given sufficient, carefully planned experiences to help them make the progress of which they are capable. Some staff in the toddler room engage more successfully with children. For example, they help them explore materials as they make dough and they read stories to them.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare are inadequate

Children's welfare needs are not met. Children are poorly occupied and engage in unsafe and disruptive behaviour in the pre-school room. Children become distressed and those in the pre-school room regularly engage in altercations with each other. This is shown by

the high level of accidents that are recorded in the pre-school room that relate to children's poor behaviour. Staff fail to tackle this behaviour effectively, regularly ignoring incidents where children put themselves and others at risk of harm. Children swing off a large wooden structure in the pre-school room, narrowly missing kicking other children in the head on multiple occasions. They run about and push each other over. Staff do not manage these instances of unsafe behaviour effectively and the behaviour escalates throughout the day. The key-person system is poorly managed. Several children have had multiple changes of key person recently due to staff leaving. Staff regularly have to move around the setting to support other rooms and this means that children have limited time with their key person. Babies' needs are not met. Some babies become distressed and staff do not successfully engage with them to comfort them. This places them at risk of emotional harm. Children's hygiene needs are generally appropriately met. For example, food is freshly and safely prepared and children wash their hands before eating and after outdoor play.

Outcomes for children are inadequate

Children are not making sufficient progress or developing the skills to support them in future learning, including those who will go to school this September. Several children are at risk of falling behind their peers because gaps in their learning are not identified or tackled and there are inadequate plans in place to support them. Children are unable to concentrate on activities for periods of time in the pre-school room because these do not meet their interests, needs or stage of development.

Setting details

Unique reference number	EY540771
Local authority	Hertfordshire
Inspection number	10102257
Type of provision	Childcare on non-domestic premises
Registers	Early Years Register, Compulsory Childcare Register, Voluntary Childcare Register
Day care type	Full day care
Age range of children	0 - 10
Total number of places	180
Number of children on roll	129
Name of registered person	Bluebells Childminders Ltd
Registered person unique reference number	RP540770
Date of previous inspection	22 March 2019
Telephone number	01462433991

Day Nursery & Afterschool Club registered in 2016 and operates under Bluebells Childminders Ltd. It is located in Hitchin, Hertfordshire. The setting employs 16 members of childcare staff. Of these, 10 hold appropriate early years qualifications at level 2 or above. The setting opens Monday to Friday from 7am until 7pm.

This inspection was carried out by Ofsted under sections 49 and 50 of the Childcare Act 2006 on the quality and standards of provision that is registered on the Early Years Register. The registered person must ensure that this provision complies with the statutory framework for children's learning, development and care, known as the early years foundation stage.

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