

Inspection of Cornerstone Day Nursery

Priestley Road, BASINGSTOKE, Hampshire RG24 9PU

Inspection date:

18 February 2020

Overall effectiveness

Requires improvement

The quality of education

Requires improvement

Behaviour and attitudes

Requires improvement

Personal development

Requires improvement

Leadership and management

Requires improvement

Overall effectiveness at previous inspection

Good

What is it like to attend this early years setting?

The provision requires improvement

Staff provide a warm and welcoming environment for children. Children are comforted by the caring staff with cuddles and reassurance to help them feel safe. Staff get to know the children well and work in partnership with parents to meet their individual needs. The curriculum covers the seven areas of learning and staff complete observations and assessments of children's learning. However, there are differences in the quality of care and education across the nursery. Children in the toddler rooms in particular, do not receive learning opportunities that are consistently as good as other areas of the nursery.

There have been changes to management arrangements, staffing, and the organisation of groups of children and their rooms. This has contributed to some practices and procedures not yet being securely embedded. Some staff are still establishing their roles and responsibilities. While there are enough adults to meet legally required ratios, staff skills and experience vary. Staff are not always effectively deployed and do not swiftly adapt their routine and the provision on offer. This impacts on their ability to meet children's needs consistently well.

Teaching is stronger in the baby room and the pre-school rooms. Pre-school children are confident and behave well. They demonstrate how safe they feel in their groups as they play with special friends and communicate confidently with staff and visitors. Staff plan some exciting activities designed to stimulate children's senses, such as when babies enjoy scooping and crushing cereal and older children experiment with textures and flavours in the play dough they make. As a result, children in these rooms are eager to explore and enjoy their learning. All staff have good expectations for the children in their care.

What does the early years setting do well and what does it need to do better?

- Managers are beginning to understand what needs to improve within the nursery. They have positive plans for the future and have started to embed a new planning system and ethos across the nursery. The manager recognises that she now needs to focus monitoring and support on improving the overall quality of teaching and the curriculum, particularly in the toddler rooms. This is to help staff raise the quality of interactions and review ways of using the environment to enable them to support children's care, learning and development, following the recent changes made. The new room leader in the older toddler room is already planning how to work best with her team to achieve this. The manager also recognises that she needs further support from the provider and senior management to effectively and confidently support her staff team.
- The inconsistent teaching in the toddler rooms limits children's enjoyment and

progress. For example, children tend to crowd around activities, such as sand play, as their learning environment is not exciting or inspiring enough to gain their attention. This means that younger toddlers are not always challenged with rich learning opportunities that support their good progress. Furthermore, at times, staff are not deployed effectively enough, and routines are not adapted to meet all children's needs swiftly enough.

- Staff observe children and assess their stages of development. They share this information with parents and other professionals involved in children's care. However, they do not use this information successfully to provide consistently challenging next steps. This is specifically for toddlers, to focus on raising children's attainment level further.
- The provision on offer for children with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) is strong. Specialist staff support children with SEND extremely well. They take advice from other professionals and put specific programmes of support in place that are well suited to the children's needs. Staff spend time with children's families and attend appointments with them, offering support and consistency for everyone involved in the children's care.
- Staff promote children's health effectively. Children can decide when they wish to play outside in the fresh air, in self-contained patio areas. Staff also ensure all children have timetabled access to the large nursery garden, even in inclement weather. However, staff have not considered how to make the most of this time to ensure children have access to well-thought-out experiences that reflect the curriculum available inside the nursery.
- Some staff have unrealistic expectations of children's ability to wait, such as during daily routines. For example, toddlers sit and wait for a long time for lunch to arrive and be served. Babies also sit for a long time before and during snack time, often spending too long waiting without interaction or support from adults. This causes children to become upset and restless, creating a hectic environment that does not support their behavioural needs and emotional well-being effectively enough.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

The management team follows effective recruitment and vetting procedures to ensure staff working with children are, and continue to be, suitable to do so. Staff have a secure understanding about their roles and responsibilities to safeguard children. They know the procedures to follow should they have any concerns about a child's welfare or a colleague's practice. Staff attend regular training, which helps ensure their knowledge remains accurate. The manager discusses safeguarding regularly with staff to reinforce this understanding. Staff supervise children well and conduct thorough risk assessments of the premises to help keep all areas safe.

What does the setting need to do to improve?

To meet the requirements of the early years foundation stage and

Childcare Register the provider must:

	Due date
provide the manager with effective support to monitor the curriculum and ensure learning experiences consistently motivate and challenge children in their learning	18/03/2020
focus support, guidance and training for staff on raising the quality of teaching so that it is of a consistently good quality.	18/03/2020

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

- improve staff deployment procedures, so they may swiftly respond to meet the changing needs of all children
- review the organisation of daily routines to ensure children are not sitting waiting for extended periods of time, for example, when meals and snacks are served
- clearly identify ambitious next steps for each child's learning and plan effectively to help children achieve these
- develop the use of the outside area to better engage children's interests, especially those who prefer to learn outdoors.

Setting details

Unique reference number	EY285254
Local authority	Hampshire
Inspection number	10108576
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 to 4
Total number of places	150
Number of children on roll	218
Name of registered person	Fencebright Limited
Registered person unique reference number	RP524314
Telephone number	01256 818118
Date of previous inspection	11 September 2012

Information about this early years setting

Cornerstones Nursery opened in 2002 and re-registered under new ownership in 2004. It is situated on the outskirts of Basingstoke, in Hampshire. The nursery receives funding for the provision of free early education to children aged two, three and four years. Children attend for a variety of sessions. The group opens each weekday from 7am to 6pm all year. The nursery employs 43 staff who work with the children, of whom 35 hold a recognised childcare qualification at level 2 or above. This includes one member of staff who is qualified at level 6.

Information about this inspection

Inspectors

Nina Lambkin
Gwendolyn Andrews

Inspection activities

- The manager and inspectors completed a learning walk in the nursery to gain an understanding of how this early years provision and the curriculum are organised.
- The inspectors observed the quality of teaching during activities indoors and outdoors, and assessed the impact this has on children's learning.
- Parents provided verbal and written feedback during the inspection. The inspector took account of their views.
- The inspector sampled a range of documentation, including suitability checks, children's development records, recruitment files, staff supervisions and professional development plans.
- A joint observation of an activity was carried out by the inspectors and manager. The inspectors also spoke to the children and staff throughout the inspection.

We carried out this inspection 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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