

Inspection of Smart Start Child Care

Poachers Pocket, Cole Hall Lane, Birmingham, Warwickshire B34 6HE

Inspection date: 31 October 2019 - 22 November 2019

Overall effectiveness	Inadequate
The quality of education	Inadequate
Behaviour and attitudes	Inadequate
Personal development	Inadequate
Leadership and management	Inadequate
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Not applicable

What is it like to attend this early years setting?

The provision is inadequate

Children's health and safety are significantly compromised due to the poor procedures in place in relation to accidents and not maintaining the required room temperatures for children. Staff are not always deployed effectively to ensure they meet the care and learning needs of all children, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). Staff warmly welcome children and their parents on arrival and help them settle. However, constant staff shortages have led to staff being moved around the nursery, resulting in a fragmented key-person system. Consequently, not all children benefit from a settled relationship with familiar staff. For example, children in the pre-school room have had four different staff caring for them in the last six months. The quality of teaching is inconsistent. Children do not make enough progress in all areas of learning due to the poor design and implementation of the curriculum. Despite this, some staff make creative use of the resources. They focus on introducing new words, ideas and concepts during their interactions, and children show sustained levels of interest. However, not all staff make effective use of what is available to capture children's interests and extend their learning. For example, during an adult-led mark-making activity, staff make no attempt to provide children with writing materials which will show the marks they are trying to make on a leaf. Staff do not differentiate their teaching methods to meet the needs of the mixed-age group. Inconsistency in the quality of teaching often leads to a lack of engagement in activities and poor behaviour, with some children running around the nursery.

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

- Staffing arrangements are inadequate. Since registration, there have been difficulties in recruiting and maintaining staff. The providers and manager of the nursery often work with the staff to cover absences. However, this arrangement is ineffective as, on occasions, the required ratio of staff to children is not met. Therefore, children's safety is not assured and the quality of staff interactions and care is inconsistent.
- A parent of a child attending this nursery has been provided with false information in relation to how an accident occurred and the time of the accident. Some accident records to ensure safe and efficient management of the setting have not been completed. This means that children's health and safety are significantly compromised.
- The providers and manager do not take prompt and effective action to tackle identified areas of weakness. For example, the barn area of the nursery where the pre-school and toddler children are cared for is not heated to a comfortable temperature. This compromises their health as the minimum required safe temperature for children is not maintained.
- The providers and manager do not guide staff to help them construct a

curriculum that is coherently planned and sequenced to help children develop across the seven areas of learning. In particular, the promotion of children's literacy, mathematical learning and understanding of the world is weak.

- Staff do not have full access to the electronic observation and assessment system. They use it to upload photographs of children engaged in activities to share with parents. However, the assessment system does not accurately help staff determine what children know and can do, to help plan for their next steps in learning. Staff do not use their knowledge of children's learning to inform the planning of activities. Consequently, activities do not consistently provide challenging and stimulating learning experiences that motivate children.
- The monitoring of staff performance at all levels is ineffective. As a result, the quality of teaching is inconsistent and ranges from good to inadequate, depending on the member of staff delivering the activity. The manager does not provide tailored individual coaching and training to those staff who need it most, to help improve the quality of their teaching swiftly.
- The recently assigned special educational needs coordinator (SENCO) lacks confidence and is not clear about her role and responsibilities. She is unclear about the procedures in place to support children with SEND. Therefore, these children do not receive the tailored and individual support they need to help close gaps in their learning.
- Due to the weaknesses in staffing arrangements, quality of teaching and assessment, children do not consistently receive the support they need to foster their enjoyment for learning. Some staff fail to respond effectively when children show little interest in what is provided. They do not engage children in meaningful play and learning experiences.
- Staff make time daily to talk to parents about their children's time at the nursery and pass on any key messages about their care. Parents report their children are happy and enjoy attending the nursery. Staff organise a parent and toddler group and various parents' events linked to special occasions, which are well attended.
- The nursery is kept clean and hygienic. Children learn to be independent as they wash their hands in preparation for their meals. They have daily opportunities to increase their physical skills outdoors in the fresh air. Children enjoy the nutritious meals, which are freshly prepared on site. Staff are aware of children's food allergies and work with parents to help meet their special dietary requirements.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are not effective.

There are no effective contingency plans to cover staff absences, to ensure there are enough staff deployed to meet children's needs. Staff report that they prioritise supervising children and managing their behaviour, rather than concentrating on the quality of their interactions. Consequently, children's welfare, care and education are compromised. Procedures followed in relation to accidents involving children are inadequate. Those in charge have not taken prompt and effective

action to ensure the temperature of the nursery is maintained at a comfortable level for children. Therefore, children's safety and welfare are not fully assured. Staff undergo the necessary vetting checks to ensure their suitability to work with children. The staff and management team have a clear understanding of child protection issues and the procedures to follow if they have a concern about abuse or neglect.

What does the setting need to do to improve?

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

We will issue a Welfare Requirements Notice requiring the provider to:

	Due date
ensure effective contingency systems are in place to cover staff absences, ensuring staffing arrangements meet the needs of all children and secure their safety	11/12/2019
ensure the premises are fit for purpose with regard to ensuring the temperature of the rooms throughout the nursery is maintained at a comfortable level for children	11/12/2019
provide effective supervision, coaching and training to improve staff teaching skills and performance so they are equipped to deliver good-quality teaching and learning experiences for all children	11/12/2019
ensure the arrangements in place to support children with SEND are effective by ensuring the SENCO is confident and capable to take on this role	11/12/2019
ensure there are robust systems in place to monitor staff and underperformance at all levels, to ensure staff are suitable to fulfil the requirements of their roles and to help secure improvement	11/12/2019

keep a written record of all accidents or injuries and first-aid treatment involving children	11/12/2019
ensure parents are provided with accurate information of any accident or injury sustained by the child on the same day.	11/12/2019

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

	Due date
ensure the seven areas of learning and development are used to shape the educational programmes in a planned and sequenced way that builds on what children know and can do, to ensure they make good progress	11/12/2019
ensure the assessment information is used as an integral part of the learning and development process to help staff plan suitably challenging activities that link to children's learning and their next steps, to help them to make good progress.	11/12/2019

Setting details

Unique reference number	2497735
Local authority	Birmingham
Inspection number	10129311
Type of provision	Childcare on non-domestic premises
Registers	Early Years Register, Compulsory Childcare Register
Day care type	Full day care
Age range of children	0 to 8
Total number of places	105
Number of children on roll	46
Name of registered person	Smart Start Child Care Ltd
Registered person unique reference number	2497734
Telephone number	07855755232
Date of previous inspection	Not applicable

Information about this early years setting

Smart Start Child Care registered in 2018 and is situated in Birmingham. It opens from Monday to Friday all year round. Sessions are from 7am until 7pm. The nursery provides funded early education for children aged two, three and four years. It employs eight members of childcare staff. Of these, one holds an appropriate early years qualification at level 6, one holds level 5, and five hold level 3.

Information about this inspection

Inspectors

Parm Sansoyer
Hayley Lapworth

Inspection activities

- The initial inspection was carried out following concerns received about the provider. A further visit was carried out because additional information was received which raised concerns about the provider.
- The inspectors observed the quality of teaching during activities and assessed the impact this has on children's learning.
- The inspectors spoke with staff and children during the inspection.
- The inspector on day one completed a joint observation with the deputy manager.
- The inspectors held meetings with the owners and deputy manager and had a telephone conversation with the manager. They looked at relevant documentation and evidence of the suitability of staff working in the nursery.
- The inspectors took into account the views of parents.

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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