

Inspection of Stramongate Nursery

Stramongate School, Blackhall Road, Kendal, Westmorland LA9 4BT

Inspection date: 5 October 2021

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

Not applicable

What is it like to attend this early years setting?

The provision requires improvement

The provider has not given the new and inexperienced manager sufficient guidance and support to secure a good standard of education for all children. However, children are well cared for and are safe, happy and settled in nursery. Key persons meet children and parents at the nursery gate with a friendly smile. Babies have strong attachments with their key person and explore the room with confidence. Staff take time to understand the needs and interests of the babies. They use their observations and knowledge of the babies' next steps to expand their learning. In the tweenies room, children explore with curiosity and confidence. Staff are available to give reassuring cuddles to those who seek them. Some children play with a special toy from home or have their comforter close by, helping them to feel settled. The children begin to learn routines and how to manage their own hygiene. In pre-school, children enjoy walks in the school grounds with staff and exploring the forest area. They sometimes use what they have found to support their learning. For example, children have learned the names of horse chestnut leaves and make rubbings of them with crayons. Other children build on their learning as they play with rolled oats when learning about 'The Three Bears' and different sizes of containers.

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

- Staff know the children well and support their personal and social development. However, not all staff focus on children's next steps to support and extend the learning of their key children. Therefore, older children are not as well prepared when they move on to school as they should be. However, in the baby room, staff regularly review children's development and provide activities that build on what they know and can do, so they make good progress.
- Younger children learn to follow routines and gain the skills and independence they need to move to the next age group room. In the tweenies room, children use cutlery with help at mealtimes. However, children in the pre-school room are not given knives and could not cut their large potatoes. This does not help older children build on skills they have already started to develop.
- The manager has identified that some children are behind in communication and language development, but this has not been fully addressed. Older children enjoy singing songs and rhymes, and some staff model language as they talk to children. However, this is not consistent for all children. At times, staff ask open questions but do not always wait for a response from children before moving on. As a result, some children are not progressing as quickly as they should.
- Parents appreciate the support they receive from staff. The COVID-19 pandemic meant that parents did not have baby groups available and had concerns about their children not being able to socialise. Staff reassured parents and offering flexible settling-in sessions for as long as needed. Consequently, staff know the

routines of children very well, especially those with medical needs. One parent said she 'completely trusts the staff' with her child and appreciated the communication between staff when her child moved rooms.

- Staff use online diaries to provide a two-way flow of information between home and the nursery. Parents comment that photographs of the activities in the diaries have information about the area of learning an activity links to. As a result, parents feel well informed about their child's time in nursery and know how to support their child's learning at home.
- Leaders have not created a planned and sequenced curriculum that supports the learning of all children. There are some planned activities provided but they do not always build on previous learning. The manager is new to role and has not fully developed robust supervision arrangements. This means that staff who need help to understand how to implement an effective curriculum are not receiving the support they need in a timely manner.
- The manager considers how to spend the funding allocated to children in receipt of early years pupil premium funding, but has not yet spent it for all children. As a result, these children do not have access to the resources they need quickly enough to help narrow gaps in learning. However, staff work well with outside agencies to support children with special educational needs and/or disabilities. They plan interventions to work on their specific targets, track their progress and have regular reviews with all involved.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Staff understand how to keep children safe. They know what to do if they have concerns about a child's welfare. The manager understands her role as designated safeguarding lead, including what to do in the event of an allegation being made against a member of staff. Other staff are familiar with who to contact if their concerns are not acted on by leaders. The manager ensures that all mandatory training is up to date. Leaders follow robust recruitment procedures to ensure the suitability of staff.

What does the setting need to do to improve?

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

- support the new and inexperienced manager to improve the quality of provision to a good standard, in particular the quality of education
- ensure the manager provides staff with effective supervision to enable them to provide a broad, well-planned, sequenced and appropriately challenging curriculum for all children
- ensure children receive the support they need to develop their communication and language skills.

Setting details

Unique reference number	2533429
Local authority	Cumbria
Inspection number	10206315
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 at time of inspection	0 to 3
Total number of places	36
Number of children on roll	59
Name of registered person	Stramongate Nursery CIO
Registered person unique reference number	2533428
Telephone number	07847479420
Date of previous inspection	Not applicable

Information about this early years setting

Stramongate Nursery registered in 2019 and operates from within the grounds of Stramongate Primary School in Kendal. The nursery employs 11 members of childcare staff. Of these, eight hold appropriate qualifications at level 3 and one holds level 2. The nursery opens from 8am to 6pm, Monday to Friday, all year round. It provides funded early education for two-, three- and four-year-old children. There is also a baby room with six places for children under two years.

Information about this inspection

Inspector

Susie Millward Sampson

Inspection activities

- This was the first routine inspection the provider received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. The inspector discussed the impact of the pandemic with the provider and has taken that into account in their evaluation of the provider.
- The manager and the inspector completed a learning walk together of all areas of the nursery and discussed the early years curriculum.
- The inspector spoke to children to find out about their time at the setting.
- The inspector spoke to staff at appropriate times during the inspection and took account of their views and ideas.
- The inspector observed the quality of education being provided, indoors and outdoors, and assessed the impact that this was having on children's learning.
- The manager and the inspector carried out a joint observation of time spent outside. They also completed a joint observation of singing and rhyme time.
- The inspector talked to the manager about the implementation of the curriculum and the impact that this has on children's learning.
- Parents shared their views about the setting with the inspector.
- The inspector looked at relevant documentation and reviewed evidence of the suitability of staff working in the nursery.

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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