

Inspection of Apple Blossom Day Nursery

Bluebird House, Haugh Lane, Hexham, Northumberland NE46 3PU

Inspection date: 14 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

Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, changes have been made to how children are dropped off and collected. Parents are no longer able to come into the nursery, instead they leave their children with a member of staff at the reception door. This helps to reduce the risk of infection. The children are welcomed warmly and they enter happily.

Children appear to feel safe and secure in the setting as they enjoy positive relationships with staff. The staff provide reassurance and are quick to respond and to give comfort when required. For example, they provide children with their comfort items and cuddles when they recognise that they need a rest. This supports children in developing secure attachments and high levels of self-esteem. Children develop independence skills. For example, they peel their own fruit and serve themselves at lunchtime.

Children access rooms that are clean and bright with a range of resources. Consequently, children can make choices in their play. Babies enjoy stacking bricks and exploring their shapes and this promotes their physical development. Children's behaviour is good. They are kind and sensitive towards each other. For example, children share books and enjoy reading to their peers.

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

- Staff are kind, responsive and caring towards the children, and are quick to give extra care when it is needed. They know the children well and have built strong attachments with them.
- Staff follow children's emerging interests. For instance, they follow the babies' love of musical instruments and singing, and babies enjoy playing with the xylophones. Staff read with children and the children read to each other.
- Children benefit from trips to see the ducks and to the library to borrow books. This widens their experiences in the community and adds to their knowledge of the world.
- Children show good levels of independence. For example, they use cutlery at mealtimes and serve their own food from a young age. Older children take responsibility for their self-care, including using the toilet independently. However, staff do not always model good hygiene practices or encourage it in the children. The children do not always wash their hands before having their snacks. This does not help to prevent the spread of germs or support the promotion of children's health.
- The children are given healthy meals and snacks and this helps to support children to make healthy choices. However, water is not always accessible for the children. For example, water bottles are placed at a height, meaning children

cannot reach them.

- The resources used in the outdoor area do not provide the children with enough challenge or build on what the children can already do. For example, children use equipment that they find easy and are not given more challenging opportunities to promote their focus on learning.
- Some staff do not routinely recognise when to engage children in conversation. Additionally, staff do not always give children enough time to answer questions before they move on to another question. Questions are not always posed in a way that encourages children to answer. This can limit the progress that children make in their communication and language skills.
- A curriculum has not been constructed and communicated well across the nursery by leaders. Not all staff know what this means for their practice. As a result, some staff do not understand what they want children to learn and do not effectively engage children in activities. During a planned activity outside, many of the children were quickly bored because it did not meet their needs. Inside the setting, children were unable to engage in a planned activity because it was not appropriate for their level of skill and understanding.
- Leaders ensure that all children, particularly those with special educational needs and/or disabilities, have full access to their entitlement to early education. Parents share their positive experiences of inclusion.
- Staff do not share sufficient information about children's learning to enable parents to guide development at home. There are plans to start parents' evenings now that the COVID-19 restrictions have been lifted.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Children are kept safe in the setting. Security is good and outdoor areas are secured before children play outside. Children are encouraged to tidy up after they finish playing, minimising the risks caused by tripping. The management team does not monitor staff's knowledge and understanding of child protection effectively enough. Not all staff have a secure enough understanding of safeguarding issues to enable them to keep children safe. For example, some staff lack knowledge of the 'Prevent' duty and are not aware of how to recognise signs that may indicate that children are at risk of extremist views.

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

ensure that the key person engages parents/carers in guiding their child's development at home	16/12/2021
consider the needs of each child and adopt a curriculum that covers all the areas of learning and development	16/12/2021
ensure that all staff have an up-to-date knowledge of safeguarding	16/12/2021
ensure water is available and accessible to children at all times	16/12/2021
help children to learn about the importance of good hygiene practices, with specific regard to handwashing.	16/12/2021

Setting details

Unique reference number	2545675
Local authority	Northumberland
Inspection number	10209703
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 at time of inspection	0 to 3
Total number of places	30
Number of children on roll	26
Name of registered person	Apple Blossom Childcare Limited
Registered person unique reference number	RP529026
Telephone number	01434 604860
Date of previous inspection	Not applicable

Information about this early years setting

Apple Blossom Day Nursery in Hexham registered in 2019. It opens Monday to Friday from 7.30am until 6pm, all year round. The nursery employs five members of childcare staff. They are all qualified at level 3 or above. It provides funded education for two-, three- and four-year-old children.

Information about this inspection

Inspector
Jane Bell

Inspection activities

- This was the first routine inspection the setting 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 inspector spoke to staff about their roles and responsibilities and how they support children's learning.
- A joint observation was conducted by the inspector and the area manager and discussions were held about children's learning.
- The inspector viewed a range of documentation, such as evidence of staff suitability and paediatric first-aid qualifications. The inspector also scrutinised the complaints folder, the risk assessments, a two-year check, and a staff member's personal folder.
- Parents shared their views of the setting with the inspector.
- The inspector conducted a learning walk with the area manager of 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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