

Inspection of Saplings Day Nursery

56 Holyhead Road, Birmingham, West Midlands B21 0LH

Inspection date: 14 October 2021

Overall effectiveness

Inadequate

The quality of education

Inadequate

Behaviour and attitudes

Inadequate

Personal development

Inadequate

Leadership and management

Inadequate

Overall effectiveness at previous inspection

Good

What is it like to attend this early years setting?

The provision is inadequate

Children are not always safeguarded because managers have not ensured that there are always enough staff present and deployed effectively to meet children's needs. This includes those who hold a current paediatric first-aid certificate in order to respond in an emergency. The organisation of the premises does not meet children's needs. At times, play spaces are overcrowded. Older children cannot safely move around the space available to them.

Some children arrive at nursery upset and struggle to settle. Staff do not offer enough emotional support or comfort to help them to understand their feelings and build positive relationships with adults. This impacts on their emotional well-being. Children do not receive enough challenging experiences to extend their learning. Some children are left to initiate their own play for long periods of time. The noise levels in the playrooms means that it is difficult for children to concentrate and communicate with each other. As a result, children lack focus and do not have a positive attitude towards learning. Older children become bored and show challenging behaviour. Staff do not help children to understand the expectations of their behaviour in a positive way. There is very little praise offered to children.

That said, children develop some skills to help them to become independent. Older children are encouraged to wash their hands before snack and mealtimes, and they help to make their own sandwiches for lunch. Younger children are provided with spoons to learn to feed themselves. Children enjoy going outside to play in the garden. They line up and follow instructions from staff.

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

- Managers do not have a sufficient oversight of the quality of provision and have failed to ensure that they continue to meet the requirements of the 'Statutory framework for the early years foundation stage'. As a result, the quality of care and education children receive is inadequate.
- The organisation of the premises does not ensure children's safety. Staff do not recognise when some play areas become overcrowded. Children struggle to safely navigate their way around furniture and other people. Babies are placed down to sleep in bouncer chairs for long periods of time. Staff do not ensure that they follow the latest guidance to ensure children's safety while sleeping. This puts children at risk of harm.
- The deployment of staff is not effective. At times, there are not enough staff present and available to work with children to meet their needs. Managers do not plan staffing arrangements effectively to ensure that somebody who holds a current paediatric first-aid certificate is on the premises and available at all times to respond in an emergency. This compromises children's safety.

- Staff provide some activities for children. For example, older children learn to use scissors and play with play dough. Younger children build with blocks. However, staff are not alert to children who do not participate in adult-led activities, and some children spend long periods of time without any engagement or interaction. This impacts on the progress children make.
- There is not enough support for children's communication and language skills. Children struggle to communicate with adults and children because the noise levels in play areas is consistently extremely high. Children who speak English as an additional language are not supported to communicate with staff and children and receive very little interaction. This impacts on the progress they make in preparation for the next stage in their learning.
- The key-person system does not meet children's individual needs. Some children remain very unsettled throughout their time at nursery, and they do not receive comfort or support from staff. Staff do not use what they know about children to help provide learning experiences that are tailored to meet their needs. For example, staff are aware that some children play on tablets for long periods of time at home. However, they do not recognise when children play only on a tablet at nursery too. This also impacts on the amount of screen time some children are exposed to.
- The arrangements for supporting children who have special educational needs and/or disabilities are weak. Plans in place for children's learning do not accurately reflect their key person's knowledge of their current development. Staff do not plan and provide opportunities to support children in making progress in their development. As a result, these children are at risk of falling further behind in their learning and development.
- Staff do not gather or use information from parents to benefit children. Some parents comment that they do not receive enough information about what their children do at nursery. Parents expectations of the nursery vary because managers do not provide them with information about their policies and procedures to ensure that they understand the service they provide. This impacts on the relationships managers and staff have with parents.
- Children's behaviour at times is poor. They challenge boundaries set by staff. Staff do not receive sufficient training to enable them respond to children's behaviour in an appropriate way. For example, they use 'time out' strategies after three separate behaviour occasions, which young children may struggle to recall. Staff do not offer praise or recognition to help children learn to regulate their own behaviour.
- Staff do not support children to maintain a healthy lifestyle. Young children are provided with jam sandwiches for lunch, which is not healthy, balanced or nutritious. Older children are served squash to drink. This means that children are provided with foods that are high in sugar, which also impacts on their oral health.
- Staff and managers do not receive effective supervision opportunities. They comment about pressures and difficulties they encounter. Training and professional development opportunities are not identified to help address weaknesses in practice in order to raise the quality of the provision for children.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are not effective.

Managers fail to ensure that the deployment of staff meets the needs of all children. They do not ensure that staff who hold a current paediatric first-aid certificate are available at all times to respond to children in an emergency. Staff do not carry out effective risk assessment as they do not identify that the organisation of the premises impacts on children's safety. Equipment that is used by children for sleeping does not keep children safe. However, staff and managers are able to identify and respond to signs of possible abuse or neglect. They know how to refer information of a safeguarding nature to other professionals. Managers understand procedures of how to manage allegations against staff.

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
improve the deployment of staff to ensure that there are enough staff to meet the needs of children at all times	29/10/2021
ensure that there are a sufficient number of staff who hold a current paediatric first-aid certificate on the premises and available at all times when children are present in order to respond to emergencies quickly	29/10/2021
improve the key-person system to provide all children with tailored care and learning that meets their individual needs	29/10/2021
provide all staff with effective supervision that supports them to undertake appropriate training and professional development opportunities to raise the quality of their practice	29/10/2021
ensure that children are provided with healthy, balanced and nutritious meals and drinks, with particular regard to supporting children's oral health	29/10/2021

ensure that children's behaviour is managed in an appropriate way to support their well-being	29/10/2021
ensure that equipment used for children to sleep promotes their safety in line with current safety guidance	29/10/2021
improve the risk assessment to ensure that all risks to children's health and safety are identified and action is taken to remove or minimise risks in a timely manner, with particular regard to the organisation of the premises	29/10/2021
ensure that there are effective arrangements in place to support children with special educational needs and/or disabilities	29/10/2021
improve the two-way flow of information with parents and/or carers to help ensure that the needs of all children are met	29/10/2021
improve the use of planning to provide challenging and enjoyable experiences for every child which takes account of their individual needs, interests and stage of development to support them in making progress in their learning and development	26/11/2021
provide support for children who speak English as an additional language so that staff are able to meet their individual needs	26/11/2021
improve the support children receive to promote their communication and language development by ensuring that they have opportunities to communicate effectively, with particular regard to reducing background noise.	26/11/2021

Setting details

Unique reference number	EY307246
Local authority	Birmingham
Inspection number	10210054
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 4
Total number of places	51
Number of children on roll	69
Name of registered person	Saplings Day Nursery (Midlands) Limited
Registered person unique reference number	RP535444
Telephone number	0121 250 0233
Date of previous inspection	3 August 2017

Information about this early years setting

Saplings Day Nursery registered in 2005. It operates in the Handsworth area of Birmingham. The nursery opens Monday to Friday, from 7.30am to 6pm, all year round, except for bank holidays. There are 13 members of childcare staff. Of these, 11 hold relevant qualifications at level 3 or above. The nursery provides funded early education for two-, three- and four-year-old children.

Information about this inspection

Inspector

Lisa Bennett

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 setting.
- We carried out this inspection as a result of a risk assessment, following information we received about the provider.
- The manager and the inspector completed a learning walk to gather information about how the provision and curriculum are organised.
- The manager and the inspector carried out a joint observation to evaluate the effectiveness of teaching.
- Parents and children spoke to the inspector and gave their views of the nursery.
- The inspector observed the quality of teaching to assess the impact of this on children's learning.
- The inspector held a meeting with the owner, manager and deputy manager and looked at relevant documentation and evidence of staff suitability.

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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