

Inspection of Clever Clogs Day Nursery

The Old Library, Coptfold Road, Brentwood, Essex CM14 4BN

Inspection date: 18 November 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 put at risk of harm and their needs are not met. At times, children receive no attention from staff who are too busy to notice them. This is because ratios are poorly maintained. Children wander around sobbing and staff do not make attempts to reassure them, or offer them comfort for a considerable period of time. Children are exposed to a number of risks due to staff's poor supervision of them. On many occasions, children are not supervised when eating and young children are able to access very small toys that pose a choking hazard. Staff are often busy answering the front door or are sat down looking away from the children, completely oblivious to these serious hazards.

Children do not have secure attachments to staff. Some children who are new to the nursery are unsettled and are in different rooms to their key person. Some babies have not been assigned a key person. This has a significant impact on children's safety and welfare. Children are often extremely bored. They are left to wander around the room and have very few positive interactions from staff. During a story time with a large group of children, there is not enough staff. The staff that are there either struggle to engage children or completely ignore them. Consequently, children are rolling around on the floor, showing no interest and displaying poor behaviour. This has a negative impact on children's motivation to learn.

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

- The provider has failed to ensure that children are safeguarded by staff. Some, but not all, staff have completed safeguarding training online. However, they have little knowledge about how and to whom they must report their concerns. Some staff have accessed no training at all and have no knowledge of how to identify or report safeguarding concerns about children, or about those who work with children. Following staff training, the manager has failed to check if staff understand the policies and procedures to follow if they have a concern.
- There are times when the nursery operates significantly out of the required ratios, including where there are only two adults working directly with up to 30 children at a time. This leads to the extremely poor-quality care of children. Children wander around upset in a noisy and chaotic environment without any reassurance by staff who are too busy to notice them. Children eat breakfast unsupervised by staff. Children play unsupervised with small parts that could pose a risk to themselves and others.
- Staff's interactions with children are extremely poor. Children are sometimes left for over 30 minutes without any attention from staff. When staff do talk to children, the quality of their interactions is not good enough. Staff have a poor understanding of the curriculum and how children learn. Many staff have not

completed any observations of children's development and do not plan for their future learning. Many staff also do not know how to assess children's learning and identify any emerging gaps so that the appropriate support can be implemented. The provider has failed to effectively monitor if staff have understood the training they have completed on children's development. Consequently, any progress that children are making cannot be attributed to the nursery.

- Induction training for new staff is ineffective. They are given a vast amount of information over a very brief period of time, which does not help them to understand expectations of their role or the nursery's policies and procedures. As a result, staff are unprepared for working with children. They lack sufficient knowledge to promote children's welfare or to offer them a settled and safe experience.
- The procedures in place to monitor staff performance are weak. The provider does not ensure that leaders and managers identify or promptly address weak staff practice. Staff do not know how to improve what they do and have little guidance as to leaders and managers expectations of them. Children's experiences in the nursery contribute little to their learning and development.
- The poor management of the key-person system is unacceptable. Although staff are assigned key children by leaders, the majority of staff lack even basic knowledge about their key children, for example, what days they attend or activities that they enjoy. Key persons do not have any relationship with parents and the vast majority of parents have not even been informed of who their child's key person is. On the day of inspection, some staff did not even know that their key children were present. This careless attitude towards such an important part of children's emotional well-being at the nursery is of very serious concern.
- Parents say they are generally satisfied with the care that staff provide. However, parents say they do not receive information about their child's development, or have not received any for a considerable period of time. They also do not receive any advice or support as to how they can support their children's development at home.
- Leaders and staff show a complete disregard for children's safety and welfare. Risk assessments are not carried out effectively. The fire door nearest the toddler room is jammed shut. The manager was not aware of this until an inspector asked her to open it and she could not. In addition, the same fire door was continually obstructed by staff storing children's beds in front of it, despite being asked not to do so.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are not effective.

The provider does not ensure that the safeguarding policy and procedures are fully implemented or understood by all staff. The safeguarding culture in the setting is of significant concern. Staff fail to recognise possible signs and symptoms of abuse or take the appropriate action. They are also unable to recognise when a member

of staff is acting inappropriately with children. Staff, including those in the management team, do not understand their responsibility to challenge safeguarding decisions that may place children at risk of harm. The ability to safeguard children is extremely poor.

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 the safeguarding policy and procedures is fully implemented and understood by all staff	07/12/2021
ensure all staff are trained so that they have a secure and up-to-date knowledge of safeguarding issues, and understand how to appropriately respond to any safeguarding concerns	07/12/2021
implement an effective induction system to help staff understand expectations of their role, how to successfully follow policies and procedures and understand their responsibilities to keep children safe	07/12/2021
implement an effective system of performance management to swiftly identify weak staff practice and provide support, supervision and coaching to promote staff's continued development	07/12/2021
ensure that each child is assigned a key person who helps make sure that every child's care is tailored to their individual needs, helps them become familiar with the setting and builds a relationship with their parents	07/12/2021

ensure staffing arrangements are effective at all times to ensure children are adequately supervised, their needs are met, they receive appropriate support for their well-being and they are kept safe	07/12/2021
take reasonable steps to ensure the safety of children, staff and others on the premises in the case of fire or any other emergency and ensure that fire doors are free of obstruction and easily opened from the inside	07/12/2021
take all reasonable steps to ensure staff and children are not exposed to risks and demonstrate how these risks are being managed	07/12/2021
ensure that the following information is available to parents and carers: staffing in the setting; the name of their child's key person and their role; how the EYFS is being delivered in the setting, and how parents and/or carers can access more information; the range and type of activities and experiences provided for children, the daily routines of the setting, and how parents and carers can share learning at home.	07/12/2021

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

	Due date
consider the individual needs, interests, and development of each child and use this information to plan a challenging and enjoyable experience for them in all areas of learning and development	23/12/2021

help staff to understand how to effectively stimulate children's interests, respond to each child's emerging needs and guide their development through warm, positive interactions coupled with secure routines for play and learning	23/12/2021
use day-to-day observations and assessment to understand children's level of achievement and shape teaching and learning experiences for each child reflecting that knowledge, so that children make good progress in all areas of learning.	23/12/2021

Setting details

Unique reference number	EY305294
Local authority	Essex
Inspection number	10214079
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 11
Total number of places	95
Number of children on roll	157
Name of registered person	Forrest Nurseries Limited
Registered person unique reference number	RP905754
Telephone number	01277 220727
Date of previous inspection	8 April 2019

Information about this early years setting

Clever Clogs Day Nursery registered in 2005. The nursery employs 23 members of childcare staff. Of these, 16 hold appropriate early years qualifications at level 2 or above. The nursery opens from Monday to Friday, all year round. Sessions are from 7am until 7pm. The nursery provides funded early education for two-, three- and four-year-old children.

Information about this inspection

Inspectors

Daniella Adams

Julie Meredith-Jenkins

Inspection activities

- We carried out this inspection as a result of a risk assessment, following information we received about the provider.
- This was the first routine inspection the provider received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. The inspectors discussed the impact of the pandemic with the manager and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the provider.
- The manager joined one of the inspectors on a learning walk and talked to the inspector about their curriculum and what they want their children to learn.
- The inspectors observed the quality of education being provided, indoors and outdoors, and assessed the impact that this was having on children's learning.
- Staff and children spoke to the inspectors during the inspection.
- The manager and one of the inspectors carried out a joint observation of an activity.
- The inspectors 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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