

Inspection of Dartmouth Pre-School

South Ford Road, DARTMOUTH, Devon TQ6 9QS

Inspection date: 2 November 2021

Overall effectiveness

Inadequate

The quality of education

Requires improvement

Behaviour and attitudes

Requires improvement

Personal development

Inadequate

Leadership and management

Inadequate

Overall effectiveness at previous inspection

Requires improvement

What is it like to attend this early years setting?

The provision is inadequate

Weaknesses in leadership and management mean that children's welfare is at risk. Leaders have not ensured that staff have a good enough understanding of safeguarding procedures and they do not share information that suggests children may be at risk of harm with the relevant agencies. Staff are not gathering the range of information needed when children first start to ensure they can keep them safe and well.

Children arrive each day happy and keen to attend. They explore confidently and staff supervise them to help them feel secure. Children form close relationships with staff, who they laugh with and invite into their play. Children behave well and learn to share, take turns and play kindly. They benefit from the positive role modelling by staff, who manage children's disagreements calmly and consistently. Children enjoy regular outdoor play and physical activities. They run, climb, ride wheeled toys and play ball games outside. Children join in creative and imaginative play with enthusiasm. For example, they make 'meals' in the garden mud kitchen with staff, enjoy music and movement activities and build large constructions with their friends. However, staff do not gather relevant information about what children can do when they first start at the setting. This means that they are not planning and providing a curriculum that enables children to get off to the best possible start.

Staff have adapted their practice in the setting to keep children and families safe throughout the COVID-19 pandemic. For example, they request that parents drop off and collect children from the door and they provide hand sanitiser for all adults and children to use before entering the premises.

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

- The setting has undergone significant staff changes over the last year. The provider notified Ofsted of the appointment of a new manager, who started three weeks ago. However, prior to this, the provider failed to notify Ofsted of several changes to the management structure. This is a breach of requirements.
- The management team does not monitor staff's knowledge and understanding of their roles and responsibilities effectively. The new manager has started to monitor the quality of teaching and has begun to arrange training. However, she has not identified the weaknesses in staff's knowledge of safeguarding issues and procedures.
- The management team does not obtain and record all the required information from parents for every new child starting at the setting. For example, they do not have the date of birth, emergency contact details or healthcare information for every child attending so that staff can meet children's needs safely.

- The manager and staff have made some improvements since the last inspection. Staff now use successful strategies to manage children's behaviour and provide more time in the garden for children who prefer outdoor play. The new manager has started to review the systems for obtaining more information about children when they start at the setting. However, she has not yet made sufficient progress with this to have an impact on improving the quality of education.
- The manager and staff have started to work closely with external professionals and parents to support the needs of children with special educational needs and/or disabilities. This includes helping parents to obtain appropriate funding for them to use to support the children's development in readiness for school.
- Some staff use good questioning techniques to encourage children's communication and language development. For example, they adapt questions to help children understand and answer questions and they provide one-to-one activity time to help children learn new words to build their vocabulary.
- Staff help children to develop an interest in books. For example, staff read stories with enthusiasm and change their voices for the characters. They encourage children to share toys relevant to the story to help them understand what words mean, such as 'tweezers' and 'stethoscopes' in a story about a hospital.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are not effective.

Staff do not have a sufficient understanding of the policies and procedures to ensure that they safeguard children's welfare. Designated safeguarding leads have not followed procedures to ensure that concerns received about a child's welfare are acted on. Staff have gaps in their knowledge and understanding of safeguarding children. They have a limited understanding of the risks to children in relation to extreme views and female genital mutilation. The provider follows robust recruitment procedures to ensure that staff are suitable to work with children. Staff maintain safe and secure play areas for children throughout the premises.

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 designated safeguarding leads respond in a timely way to any information or signs that a child might be at risk of possible abuse and neglect	16/11/2021

improve staff development to ensure that all staff have a good up-to-date understanding of safeguarding issues and the signs that a child might be at risk of possible abuse	16/11/2021
obtain and record all required information for each child attending the setting	16/11/2021
improve the use of assessments to ensure that staff understand what children know and can do from the start, to plan their learning more effectively.	30/11/2021

Setting details

Unique reference number	106107
Local authority	Devon
Inspection number	10115330
Type of provision	Childcare on non-domestic premises
Registers	Early Years Register, Compulsory Childcare Register
Day care type	Sessional day care
Age range of children at time of inspection	2 to 4
Total number of places	18
Number of children on roll	13
Name of registered person	Dartmouth Pre-school Committee
Registered person unique reference number	RP905303
Telephone number	01803 834449
Date of previous inspection	26 June 2019

Information about this early years setting

Dartmouth Pre-School opened in 1961 and registered in 1992. It operates from a school hall in Dartmouth, Devon. The pre-school is open between 9am and 3pm from Monday to Friday, during term time. It receives funding for the provision of free early education for children aged two, three and four years. There are five members of staff employed. The manager holds an early years qualification at level 6, one member of staff is a qualified primary school teacher and two staff hold early years qualifications at level 3.

Information about this inspection

Inspector

Bridget Copson

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 manager and has taken that into account in their evaluation of the setting.
- The manager completed a learning walk around the premises with the inspector and explained how they meet children's needs and deliver the curriculum.
- The inspector observed activities and the quality of staff's interactions with the children. She discussed the quality of staff's teaching skills with the manager.
- The inspector sampled documents and discussed the manager's knowledge of the requirements of the early years foundation stage.
- The inspector took account of the views of children and 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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