

Inspection of Smart Kids Childcare

Bhailok Square, Fulwood, Preston, Lancashire PR2 8DY

Inspection date:

24 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

Outstanding

What is it like to attend this early years setting?

The provision is inadequate

Not all children benefit from a positive experience at the nursery. Children in the toddler room are immersed in a chaotic, unorganised environment. Although staff work hard to try and support all children, they are unsuccessful. In particular, children with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) are not supported effectively. Staff have some ideas of the things they want children to learn. However, the curriculum is not well implemented or adapted to meet children's individual learning needs. As a consequence, some children, particularly younger children, are frequently not engaged in purposeful learning.

Pre-school children have a different experience. They are happy, excited and eager to learn. Children enjoy working together to role play everyday tasks, such as making dinner. They explore quantity using sand and discuss 'full', 'half full' and 'empty'. Staff are clear about their expectations for positive behaviour. Older children have learned to share, take turns and be kind and considerate towards each other.

Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, parents no longer routinely enter the nursery. On the whole, children have adapted well to this change and enter the nursery confidently with a staff member.

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

- Leadership and management are poor. Managers have not addressed significant weaknesses in the quality of the nursery. Despite being aware of the challenges faced by staff within the toddler room, they have failed to provide them with additional support. The arrangements for supervision, coaching and mentoring are weak. Managers do not provide accurate feedback to help staff to improve their knowledge and skills. This means the quality of education across the nursery is inconsistent. For instance, some staff do not extend activities further to challenge most-able children. Additionally, some staff provide children with lots of narration and discussions about what they are doing, while other staff say very little. This has a negative impact on children's emerging language skills.
- Due to the poor organisation of staff, children in the toddler room do not consistently benefit from high-quality interactions. For instance, circle times are rushed and ineffective as staff are needed elsewhere. This hinders children's learning. Staff ask children questions but do not allow them time to answer. Children are not given time to think about and process new words and songs. As a result, they lose interest quickly and demonstrate poor levels of engagement.
- The curriculum is poorly planned and implemented, particularly for children with SEND. Some staff do not understand how to implement the curriculum intent. For instance, they plan an activity to teach children about action words but then

do not include these words in their conversations. Staff are able to identify children who may be at risk of falling behind. However, a lack of support from managers prevents them from implementing targeted support plans effectively. This means that some children do not make good progress in their learning.

- All children have regular access to activities that promote their physical skills both indoors and outdoors. Younger children exercise their large muscles as they learn to use the climbing equipment independently. Older children access weekly swimming lessons. Children enjoy a balanced diet and have access to fresh drinking water. However, staff do not consistently follow good hygiene practices. For instance, they do not always wash their hands after wiping children's noses. This increases the spread of infection and does not help to promote children's health.
- The key-person system is effective. Staff get to know children well and have formed strong bonds with them and their families. On the whole, most parents are happy. They receive regular updates on their children's development with suggestions of how learning can be extended at home.
- Pre-school children eagerly take part in activities that promote their literacy skills. For instance, they learn how to pronounce correctly the initial letter sounds of objects they are familiar with. They use paintbrushes and flour to make marks and strengthen their small muscles. This helps to prepare them for early writing and their eventual transition to school.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are not effective.

Although the minimum staff-to-child ratios are maintained, staff are not deployed effectively. This means that they are unable to meet the needs of all children, in particular children with SEND. This puts children at a significant disadvantage. That said, staff are able to identify the signs and symptoms of abuse. They understand the procedures to follow if they have concerns about a child or the behaviour of a member of staff. Staff know how to refer any concerns beyond the leadership team should they need to. The procedures for staff recruitment and ongoing staff suitability are effective.

What does the setting need to do to improve?

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

	Due date
implement effective supervision, coaching and mentoring systems to support staff and raise the quality of education to a good level	22/12/2021

ensure that staff are deployed effectively to meet the needs of all children	05/01/2022
ensure that staff follow good hygiene practices consistently and teach children why these are important	22/12/2021
improve the quality of the curriculum and ensure that it meets the needs of all children, including those with SEND.	05/01/2022

Setting details

Unique reference number	EY453915
Local authority	Lancashire
Inspection number	10216057
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	106
Number of children on roll	43
Name of registered person	Smart Kids Childcare
Registered person unique reference number	RP907794
Telephone number	01772 719719
Date of previous inspection	6 February 2018

Information about this early years setting

Smart Kids Childcare registered in 2013. The nursery employs nine members of childcare staff. Of these, seven hold appropriate early years qualifications at level 3 or above, including one staff member who holds early years professional status. The nursery opens Monday to Friday, all year round, from 7.30am to 6pm, except for the period between Christmas and New Year. It provides funded early education for two-, three- and four-year-olds.

Information about this inspection

Inspector

Kayte Farrell

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 nursery.
- The manager gave the inspector a tour of the nursery. The room leaders discussed how the curriculum is planned and implemented.
- The inspector observed the quality of education indoors and outdoors and evaluated the impact on children's learning.
- Discussions were held with the staff, parents and children at appropriate times throughout the inspection.
- A leadership and management meeting was held with the providers. Documentation relating to the suitability of staff was checked. The inspector looked at qualification certificates and paediatric first-aid certificates.

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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