

Inspection of Hedgehogs Pre-School at Maryhill

Hedgehogs Preschool at Maryhill, Kidsgrove Primary, Gloucester Road, Kidsgrove,
Stoke-On-Trent ST7 4DJ

Inspection date: 14 December 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's safety is compromised as staff do not have sufficient knowledge and understanding about safeguarding. Children's behaviour has not always been managed appropriately by some staff. Children have been prevented from making their own choices about sitting for circle time or snack time. Highchairs have been used to try to ensure children remain seated. This impacts on children's ability to gain an understanding of how they should behave.

Children learn to take turns and to share. They enjoy making 'chocolate crunch' together. They wait for their turn to stir cereals into the chocolate mixture and then spoon it into their paper cases. Children enjoy singing songs and nursery rhymes. They sing their 'hello' song to each other. Some children demonstrate their confidence, and they stand and sing their chosen songs. They sing songs such as 'When Santa got stuck up the chimney' and 'Incy wincy spider'. Soft toys, such as a spider, linked to nursery rhymes are introduced to try help children stay focused. However, this is not always successful as children wander off.

Previously, children have not spent much time outdoors. With recent changes to management and the premises, children now have access to a fully secure outdoor area. Children enjoy practising their developing physical skills by riding on or pushing wheeled toys. Indoors, children explore the texture of sand and enjoy using tools, such as paint brushes or chinks, to make marks in the sand.

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

- The pre-school has undergone some recent changes in staffing. The provider has taken on the management role. Although staff have attended training, leaders do not monitor staff's knowledge and understanding effectively enough. Not all staff have a secure understanding of the signs that could indicate a child is at risk. Consequently, children are not robustly safeguarded or protected from suffering harm.
- The provider failed to implement appropriate arrangements for the supervision of all her staff. This meant the lack of support previously given to staff by leaders was not identified. Staff felt unable to challenge or voice their concerns about how children's behaviour was managed. Therefore, the setting's policies and procedures relating to raising concerns about behaviour of staff have not been followed. Consequently, children were not adequately safeguarded. The provider took action when she became aware of the concerns. She put systems in place for staff supervisions, but these are not yet fully embedded.
- The provider and staff know what they want children to learn and when. Staff plan a curriculum that is based around children's interests, preferences and next steps. Through observations and assessments, staff monitor children's progress

to identify any gaps in their learning. However, the quality of teaching is not always good. At times, staff's interactions do not challenge children's thinking. This results in children not being able to explore ideas and or extend their own learning. Children become disengaged and do not sustain high levels of interest in the chosen activity.

- Staff do not give sufficient focus to support children's communication and language skills. Opportunities are missed by staff to introduce new words and further extend children's range of vocabulary and language. Staff do not ask enough questions that invite children to elaborate in their answers when interacting with them in their play.
- Although the provider keeps appropriate documentation for the safe and efficient management of the setting, this is not always completed fully. Documents are missing where there have been incidents of poor behaviour, or when a child has been restrained. This is a breach in requirements and does not keep children safe.
- Through the provider's self-evaluation, she recognises that the premises are not organised in a way that meets children's individual needs. Children do not access all the activities or resources that are on offer. Posters that are designed to help children recognise emotions are not within their eyesight. The provider plans to reorganise the areas to better support children's learning needs.
- Parents report that they are happy with the care their children receive. However, there is scope to further improve relationships with parents and the two-way flow of information. Written complaints are investigated. However, verbal concerns are not always effectively managed so that parents receive a response about any action taken.
- There are opportunities for children to gain an early mathematical understanding. Children compare their height on a chart and like to see how tall they have grown.
- Staff are kind and caring. With new management in place, staff are beginning to build children's self-esteem. They praise them and reward them with stickers. Staff support children to gain an understanding of a healthy lifestyle. They encourage children to wash their hands after activities, play outdoors and before eating. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the children wash their hands on arrival to help to maintain a good standard of hygiene. Children learn about good eating habits as they enjoy their healthy snacks and packed lunches.
- Children with special educational needs and/or disabilities are supported. Staff work with parents and other professionals to put plans in place to support their learning. Staff know children well. They follow the relevant plans, which helps children to settle and make some progress in their development.
- Staff work closely with the linked school to ensure children are ready to move into the Reception class. Children visit the school to meet their teachers to support their transition. This helps them to become familiar with their surroundings and helps to support children emotionally with their feelings about the change.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are not effective.

The management team do not have sufficient oversight of staff's knowledge of safeguarding. Staff have failed to keep children safe as they have not been confident enough to follow pre-school policies in relation to reporting concerns about staff behaviour. That said, the provider took swift action to safeguard children when concerns were eventually brought to her attention. Staff knowledge and understanding of safeguarding in some areas are weak. They have attended training but this has not been fully effective. Therefore, children are not fully protected. The provider ensures that all staff hold a current first-aid certificate. Risk assessments are completed to ensure that all areas used by children are safe.

What does the setting need to do to improve?

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

	Due date
ensure that all staff have a robust knowledge and understanding of all aspects of safeguarding	28/01/2022
ensure that staff follow the setting's procedures relating to reporting concerns about members of staff	28/01/2022
ensure that children's behaviour is managed appropriately	28/01/2022
ensure that appropriate arrangements are in place for the supervision of staff	28/01/2022
ensure that appropriate documentation relating to any incident of poor behaviour or where restraint has been used is kept	28/01/2022
improve staff interactions with children to better challenge children's thinking, explore ideas and extend their learning experiences	25/02/2022
improve staff teaching practice to extend children's progress in communication and language.	25/02/2022

To further improve the quality of the early years provision, the provider should:

- continue to use self-evaluation to make changes to improve the organisation of the childcare on offer
- improve the two-way flow of information with parents so that any verbal concerns are dealt with appropriately.

Setting details

Unique reference number	EY468901
Local authority	Staffordshire
Inspection number	10217045
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 3
Total number of places	16
Number of children on roll	21
Name of registered person	Rochelle, Gemma Jayne
Registered person unique reference number	RP909502
Telephone number	07812183939
Date of previous inspection	7 September 2017

Information about this early years setting

Hedgehogs Pre-School at Maryhill registered in 2013. The pre-school employs four members of childcare staff, all of whom hold appropriate early years qualifications from level 3 to level 6. The pre-school opens from Monday to Friday during term time only. Sessions are from 9am until 3pm. The pre-school provides funded early education for two- and three-year-old children.

Information about this inspection

Inspector

Jennifer Turner

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 provider.
- The inspector spoke with staff, parents and children at appropriate times throughout the inspection.
- A learning walk was completed with the provider to discuss the curriculum intent and how the provision is organised.
- The inspector completed a joint evaluation of an activity with the provider.
- The inspector observed interactions between staff and children during activities and assessed the impact of teaching on children's learning.
- The inspector held a meeting with the provider/manager. She reviewed a variety of documents, including evidence of the suitability of staff, qualifications, first-aid certificates and policies.
- We carried out this inspection as a result of a risk assessment, following information we received about the provider.

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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