

Inspection of Aktiva Nurseries, Oakfield

The Dalby Community Building, Siding Road, Broughton, Aylesbury,
Buckinghamshire HP22 7AY

Inspection date: 8 February 2022

Overall effectiveness	Inadequate
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The quality of education	Inadequate
Behaviour and attitudes	Inadequate
Personal development	Inadequate
Leadership and management	Inadequate
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Not applicable

What is it like to attend this early years setting?

The provision is inadequate

Not all children receive the support they need. This significantly impacts on their development, learning and sense of belonging at the nursery. Some children with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) are not supported effectively. Some staff do not know enough about their key children with SEND to confidently meet their individual needs. On the day of the inspection, these children spent prolonged periods of time with little interaction or support from staff.

Babies and very young children receive lots of cuddles from attentive staff. Babies enjoy snuggling in, to listen to stories and to settle to sleep. Older children show they enjoy playing with their friends. Children are supervised closely to help keep them safe.

Children show initial enthusiasm for toys and resources. However, there are weaknesses in how the curriculum is planned and delivered, and in some staff's knowledge of how children learn. As a result, children spend much of their time taking part in activities that they may enjoy but which are not also supporting their learning well. During the inspection, some older children repeatedly returned to repetitive play, such as pushing doll buggies around and around. Staff do not have high enough aspirations for children's learning to recognise that these children are capable of more and need further stimulation to engage in meaningful learning. Due to weaknesses in the curriculum, other aspects of older children's behaviour also deteriorated during the inspection. For example, children threw bricks and blocks. This added to the disorderly and noisy environment.

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

- The manager and other senior staff identify children who may need extra support. They work effectively with parents and other professionals to understand children's specific needs and challenges. However, although support plans are documented they are not implemented effectively. Staff are unclear about how they can support these children well, while waiting for additional funding to be approved. Some children with SEND are not having their needs met well.
- All children are allocated a key person. Sometimes, staff changes lead to necessary changes to these arrangements. However, the manager does not check that information about children's specific needs and development is understood by the incoming key person. This means that staff who take the lead in planning for children's care and learning do not always know enough about children's particular needs to do this effectively. This is especially the case for some children with SEND.
- Some staff do not have an accurate understanding of how children learn. This

leads to them identifying inappropriate next steps for children's learning. For example, some staff have a poor understanding of how to support young children with speech and language delays.

- Staff do not fully understand the curriculum. They plan activities for older children to cover all the areas of learning, without a well-defined focus on the specific skills or knowledge they want children to learn next. For example, staff add mathematical resources to sensory play experiences with the aim of helping children learn to count and recognise numbers. However, they do not consider how to use these resources in a meaningful way.
- Children have opportunities to listen to stories. Staff working with babies and younger children find cosy corners to look at books with babies. Staff read in an animated way and point out pictures. Babies and younger children show delight and interest. Older children show an interest in stories and show some understanding of how stories are structured.
- Staff meet children's care needs diligently. They frequently check and change nappies and help older children become more independent in meeting their own personal needs. Staff follow babies' routines from home and are flexible about sleep times. Children have daily fresh air.
- Some babies and younger children find resources fascinating. For example, babies enjoy exploring baskets of colourful items and pulling themselves to standing, using low-level tables for support. However, a significant number of older children show less interest in what is on offer. These children flit quickly between play, often dropping or discarding resources as they do so. The room becomes untidy and activities begin to look unappealing. Staff do not offer effective support to help these children focus and take part in meaningful learning experiences.
- Children show they can behave well. They are polite to visitors and have good manners when eating. However, weaknesses in the curriculum lead to times when older children's behaviour deteriorates. Staff do not always intervene promptly, such as when children begin throwing toys. When staff do offer support, they do not devote enough attention to ensuring children understand and change their behaviour. For example, children are told to use 'walking feet' but still continue running.
- Staff report they find the manager approachable and supportive. They appreciate her support for their mental well-being. There are people and systems in place to support the manager now to make the necessary improvements to the provision.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

The provider takes appropriate steps to ensure those employed to work with children are suitable to do so. Thorough checks are completed before new staff are appointed. Overall, staff have thorough safeguarding knowledge and are able to identify when a child may be at risk of harm. Staff understand the importance of promptly sharing any concerns, to keep children safe. Staff supervise children

closely at all times, including at mealtimes and when arriving or leaving nursery. Staff ensure the premises are safe and secure and that resources are suitable and in good condition.

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 arrangements for meeting the needs of children with SEND to ensure they receive the support they need to join in, learn and make the progress of which they are capable	25/03/2022
improve key-person arrangements, to ensure information between staff is shared promptly and thoroughly so new key persons have an accurate understanding of key children's needs and are able to meet them effectively	25/03/2022
provide those in leadership roles with support and guidance to enable them to monitor staff practice and knowledge effectively, to improve the curriculum and teaching, in order to provide children with consistently challenging and stimulating learning experiences	25/03/2022
improve the learning environment for older children, to help children focus and engage well in their learning	25/03/2022
support staff to identify when children need guidance about acceptable behaviour, so staff can intervene and support children promptly and appropriately.	25/03/2022

Setting details

Unique reference number	2535490
Local authority	Buckinghamshire
Inspection number	10215192
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	75
Name of registered person	Aktiva Nurseries Ltd
Registered person unique reference number	RP545594
Telephone number	02035518909
Date of previous inspection	Not applicable

Information about this early years setting

Aktiva Nurseries, Oakfield registered in 2019. It operates from the Dalby community building located on the Kingsbrook housing development in the Oakfield area of Aylesbury, Buckinghamshire. It is open from 7.30am to 6pm, Monday to Friday, throughout the year. The provider employs 17 members of staff, of whom nine hold appropriate qualifications at level 2 or level 3. The provider is in receipt of funding to provide early education to children aged two, three and four years.

Information about this inspection

Inspector

Sarah Holley

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 evaluations of the provider.
- The manager and inspector completed a learning walk together and discussed the early years curriculum.
- The inspector carried out a joint observation with the manager.
- Parents and children shared their views and the inspector took these into account.
- The inspector held meetings with the manager and other senior members of staff.

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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