

Inspection of Abbots Langley Pre-School

St Lawrence Church Hall, Abbots Langley WD5 0AS

Inspection date: 24 March 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

Good

What is it like to attend this early years setting?

The provision is inadequate

There are multiple breaches of safeguarding and welfare requirements and learning and development requirements, that have a significant impact on children's safety and well-being. Children, including those who have specific individual needs, do not receive the quality of care and education to which they are entitled. Due to significant staffing issues and changes across the setting, there is a very limited curriculum in place. As a result, children do not engage in meaningful play and learning. Staff frequently have to focus on trying to meet children's care needs, which leaves them with little time to respond to support children's learning.

A lack of planned, purposeful activity, coupled with a poorly managed learning environment, means that most children have few opportunities to engage with staff. This limits their ability to develop key skills for future learning, such as their speaking and listening skills. Staff are also unable to work with children to close identified gaps in their development. This undermines the progress of children with developing special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). Children are frequently bored and their behaviour deteriorates. Staff are unable to intervene in some behavioural incidents and this means that children receive very mixed messages about what is expected of them. Children do not make sufficient progress as a result of the experiences they receive at the pre-school.

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

- The provider does not have adequate oversight of the quality at the pre-school or of their responsibilities as a registered provider, to ensure that all requirements are met. For example, Ofsted has not been informed of all persons who make up the registered body. This does not help ensure that the relevant checks are completed to assess their suitability. Additionally, the provider has failed to inform Ofsted of a change in the manager of the setting. The provider does not follow their own and the local safeguarding partner's procedures with regards to allegations against staff.
- The manager and staff clearly care about the children who come to pre-school. Any child who is distressed is warmly comforted and staff try to meet children's emotional needs. However, despite raising their concerns about the deterioration in quality with the provider, insufficient action has been taken to address their concerns. A number of staff have left the setting at short notice, and have yet to be replaced with permanent staff. This means that children are frequently cared for by staff who stay for a short period of time. These staff have limited understanding of their roles. They do not understand the, sometimes, significant needs of the children they are being asked to care for or even their names.
- Staff tend to observe the children rather than engage with them. Those staff who are most experienced in working directly with children to support their

learning are frequently occupied with basic care tasks. Other staff fail to recognise emerging risks or to take action to address them. This means that children are frequently exposed to hazards, such as being able to climb over a fence into a car park by standing on a box. They also walk around with food in their mouths. As the staff team is so stretched, the key-person system is ineffective. This means that children's individual needs are not securely met. For example, at times children are left in wet nappies or wet clothes for longer than necessary.

- At times, when staff are able to sit with children there are moments of calm and children have some engagement with staff to support their learning. For example, children build towers with blocks and take part in a large role-play activity, where they pretend to go on a trip to the shops. This engages most children for some time. However, the activity loses momentum and children's behaviour deteriorates again. Staff take some measures to promote children's independence. For example, children wash their hands before eating.
- There are no clear strategies in place to manage children's behaviour as new initiatives are brought in frequently. Staff are not trained in these initiatives and this leads to confusion in the team. Children are not aware of what is expected of them and they find it more difficult to regulate their own behaviour. Staff, sometimes, use physical intervention in children's behaviour unnecessarily. For instance, they pick children up and move them, and this means that children do not learn how to manage their own behaviour.
- Staffing arrangements are insufficient to meet the needs of children present. There are not enough staff with secure knowledge of the setting procedures or of the needs of individual children. As a result, children do not receive supportive and effective help to make progress in their learning. This includes children who receive extra funding. The provider and manager have not established how to spend the funding for the needs of these children. Arrangements for children with emerging SEND are ineffective and these children do not receive appropriate support during their time at pre-school.
- Training in place for staff who are new to the setting is insufficient to induct them into their roles. Staff are not aware of basic procedures in the pre-school, such as how to manage any head injuries. This means that they do not follow the appropriate steps to protect children's health.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are not effective.

There is limited oversight from the provider. This, coupled with their poor knowledge of some of their responsibilities, means that the approach to child protection is inconsistent. Some staff have a limited knowledge of all signs of abuse and the processes to follow. The manager is frequently too overwhelmed by her responsibilities to have clear oversight of all issues. She has established some effective links with outside professionals who are involved in children's lives, to share relevant information to protect children. However, she is poorly supported by the provider and procedures to recognise and respond to developing concerns are

poor. This does not assure children's safety.

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 that all adults working with children understand and follow appropriate procedures for managing children's behaviour	29/04/2022
make sure staff keep a record of any physical intervention and share the information with parents as soon as possible	29/04/2022
implement an effective policy and procedure, in line with the local safeguarding partners, with particular regard to allegations against staff	29/04/2022
ensure all staff understand how to act and respond to child protection concerns and allegations against staff, including reporting to statutory agencies	29/04/2022
implement effective induction, training and supervision procedures, so that all persons who work with children understand and are able to fulfil the requirements of their role	29/04/2022
make sure that all persons working with children understand and follow the accident procedures in relation to head injuries	29/04/2022
undertake effective risk assessment to identify all potential hazards and to remove or minimise those hazards	29/04/2022
ensure that staffing arrangements meet children's needs and assure their safety	29/04/2022

take all necessary steps to ensure that children are unable to leave unaccompanied	29/04/2022
ensure that each child has a key person who understands their needs, to provide them with a settled relationship and to make sure their individual needs are met at all times	29/04/2022
provide Ofsted with all necessary information to undertake all required checks on persons who make up the registered body.	29/04/2022

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

	Due date
ensure that practitioners consider the individual needs, interests and development of each child in their care and use this information to plan a challenging and enjoyable experience for each child in all areas of learning and development	29/04/2022
take action to ensure that staff can identify and minimise any emerging gaps in children's development early, such as communication and personal, social and emotional development	29/04/2022
ensure that practitioners understand what they want children in the setting to learn, and provide effective learning experiences that stimulate children's interests and to respond to each child's emerging needs.	29/04/2022

Setting details

Unique reference number	EY540884
Local authority	Hertfordshire
Inspection number	10231638
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	30
Number of children on roll	44
Name of registered person	Abbots Langley Pre-School Limited
Registered person unique reference number	RP548520
Telephone number	07467101306
Date of previous inspection	23 November 2018

Information about this early years setting

Abbots Langley Pre-School registered in 2016. The pre-school employs three members of childcare staff. Of these, two hold appropriate early years qualifications at level 3. The pre-school opens from Monday to Friday, during term time only. Morning sessions are from 9am to 12 midday, a lunch club is offered from 12 midday to 12.30pm and afternoon sessions are from 12.15pm to 3.15pm. The pre-school provides funded early education for two-, three- and four-year-old children.

Information about this inspection

Inspector

Naomi Brown

Inspection activities

- This was the first 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.
- This inspection was carried out following the risk assessment process.
- The inspector viewed all areas of the provision and discussed the safety and suitability of the premises.
- The manager and the inspector discussed the curriculum and what it is that they want their children to learn.
- Children spoke to the inspector during the inspection.
- The inspector observed the interactions between staff and children.
- Parents shared their views of the setting with the inspector.
- The inspector carried out joint observations of group activities with the manager.
- The inspector looked at relevant documentation and 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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