

Inspection of Little Caterpillars

The Stables, Coppingford Road, Sawtry, HUNTINGDON, Cambridgeshire PE28 5XT

Inspection date: 13 April 2022

Overall effectiveness	Inadequate
The quality of education	Good
Behaviour and attitudes	Good
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

Children's safety is compromised. The provider, who is also the manager, has failed to ensure that there is at least one member of staff on the premises who holds a valid paediatric first-aid qualification. She has not ensured that the designated lead practitioner responsible for safeguarding has completed training in line with local safeguarding partners. This does not support children's safety and welfare.

Children thoroughly enjoy themselves at this friendly nursery. They arrive eagerly and separate from their carers with ease. Children explore numerous exciting resources that are planned around their interests. Staff extend activities to build on children's existing knowledge. For example, when children show an interest in frogspawn, staff help them to learn about the life cycle of a frog.

Children demonstrate that they feel secure. They form close, nurturing relationships with adults and seek out their key person for affection and cuddles. Children form close bonds with each other. They are kind and support their friends in tasks such as hanging up coats and bags. Older children delight in planning treasure hunts for their younger friends. They eagerly support them to find the eggs they have hidden.

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

- The provider fails to ensure that all legal requirements are met. There is no member of staff with a valid paediatric first-aid qualification on the premises while children are present. This does not help to keep children safe in an emergency. Furthermore, the designated lead practitioner responsible for safeguarding has not completed suitable training to be able to follow the local safeguarding partnership guidelines.
- Staff talk about the close relationships they have as a team. They regularly discuss and evaluate activities to help identify ways to support children's learning. The manager encourages her staff to undertake further training courses to help them gain higher qualifications. In addition, a new online training package has been arranged to further support staff's practice.
- Staff have a secure knowledge of the children's abilities. They make good use of ongoing assessments to help children make progress across all areas of learning. However, at times, staff do not allow children to follow their own interests independently, particularly during planned activities. This means that, sometimes, children's interest and curiosity is not supported effectively.
- Children enjoy a language-rich environment. They enjoy regular song and story sessions where staff model lots of new and descriptive words. Children enthusiastically recall past stories and act them out, using puppets and props. Staff further encourage a love of literacy with a well-established library system.

Children of all reading abilities are encouraged to share stories with their families.

- The manager adapts the environment well to meet the needs of the wide age group of children. Younger children have access to a soft-play area. This supports their physical development. Older children enjoy a 'chill out' room to relax in after school and during the holidays. This provides a quiet space should children want to rest or read a book.
- Outdoor learning opportunities are particularly strong in the nursery. Children discuss water safety in the 'beach' area. They learn to challenge themselves physically as they play on the extensive climbing and balancing equipment.
- Partnerships with parents are good. Parents speak highly of staff and the learning opportunities children receive. They also value the close bond children have with the manager and staff.
- Staff use circle time to support children's understanding of essential hygiene procedures. They use enjoyable methods to engage children and assess their knowledge. For example, children enthusiastically play the 'thumbs up, thumbs down' game when carrying out lunchtime routines.
- The manager seeks regular input from parents and children and acts on their feedback. For example, she is in the process of introducing electronic journals to further support communication with parents. This helps to provide a consistent approach in children's learning and care needs.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are not effective.

The lead practitioner responsible for safeguarding has failed to complete child protection training in line with local safeguarding partners. Despite this, the manager and staff understand the signs and symptoms which may indicate a child is at risk of harm. All staff are aware of the process to follow if they have concerns about the welfare of a child and the need to report them in a timely manner.

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 lead practitioner responsible for safeguarding completes safeguarding training in line with local safeguarding partnership guidelines	13/05/2022

ensure that at least one person caring for children has an appropriate paediatric first-aid qualification.	30/04/2022
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To further improve the quality of the early years provision, the provider should:

- provide staff with effective support to develop their skills to help children lead their own play.

Setting details

Unique reference number	EY458991
Local authority	Cambridgeshire
Inspection number	10113065
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	2 to 11
Total number of places	24
Number of children on roll	40
Name of registered person	Connolly, Gail
Registered person unique reference number	RP514963
Telephone number	01487832882
Date of previous inspection	10 June 2013

Information about this early years setting

Little Caterpillars registered in 2012. The nursery employs six members of childcare staff. Of these, three hold relevant qualifications at level 3, and two hold qualifications at level 2. The nursery opens from Monday to Friday for 51 weeks of the year. Sessions are from 7.30am to 6pm. The nursery provides funded early education for three- and four-year-old children.

Information about this inspection

Inspector

Antonia Campbell

Inspection activities

- This was the first routine inspection the nursery 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 inspector observed the quality of education to assess the impact on children's learning.
- The inspector spoke to several parents during the inspection and considered their views.
- The inspector and the manager carried out a joint observation of an activity to assess the quality of teaching.
- The inspector looked at relevant documents, including evidence of the suitability of all staff.
- The inspector and the manager discussed how the nursery is organised.
- The inspector held discussions with the manager and staff about the monitoring of learning and development in the nursery and tracked the progress of children.

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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