

Inspection of Busy Bees Day Nursery at Meopham

Meopham School, Wrotham Road, Meopham, GRAVESEND, Kent DA13 0AH

Inspection date: 13 May 2022

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

Significant changes to the leadership team, manager and staff have had a negative impact on the nursery. This has resulted in numerous breaches of welfare requirements. Consequently, children's safety and well-being cannot be assured.

The key person approach is ineffective. As a result, babies and younger children do not develop the bonds they need with key staff to help them feel safe and secure. Too often babies are passed between staff, including those who are unfamiliar to them. Younger children become visibly distressed and cry for long periods despite staff offering babies reassurance with cuddles. Overall, children behave well. Older children learn the importance of taking turns and sharing as they play cooperatively with their friends.

Children do not benefit from a curriculum that is tailored to their individual needs. Younger children do not make good progress in their speaking skills. Staff recognise that some children's speech is limited and hinders how they can communicate their wants, needs and wishes. However, they do not provide effective learning experiences or target their teaching to help children to catch up. Consequently, the gaps in children's communication and language skills continue to widen. Children who benefit from additional funding consistently fall behind in this area of their learning.

Pre-school children enjoy learning, they concentrate in activities that interest them. For instance, they play bingo and match some numbers on their boards. However, when some children do not know the numbers or find holding pens difficult, staff fail to recognise and help children to learn new information or master new skills.

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 nursery or of their responsibilities to ensure that all requirements are met. The senior leadership team, including the manager, recognise that this has contributed to the significant breaches in welfare requirements. This includes a failure to notify Ofsted of a significant event.
- As a result of the COVID-19 pandemic, the senior management team and staff have had a period of significant change. Staff have left the nursery and new staff, including the manager, have joined. The providers support for the manager is not effective. Despite her ambition and vision for the nursery, the manager is hindered from achieving this. She often covers staff absence and works directly in rooms to provide care for children. The senior leadership team, including the manager, recognise that the lack of leadership oversight has contributed to the significant breaches in welfare requirements.

- The provider does not ensure that the processes in place to keep children safe are implemented effectively. They fail to make sure that the leadership team gather all necessary information to assure staff suitability to work with children. Although leaders provide safeguarding training, they do not check the impact of this training to address gaps in staff's knowledge. These breaches of the welfare requirements place children at risk of harm.
- Leaders do not put effective support in place for the manager. The manager does not ensure staff receive effective induction, supervision or support. She does not review staff knowledge or practice to strengthen the provision and drive improvement. Weaknesses in some staff's teaching practice have been identified, but not addressed. Staff who are new to the nursery are not supported to understand the nursery's policies and procedures.
- The key-person system is not effective. Ongoing staffing issues have a great impact on children's continuity of care and learning. This is particularly evident for the youngest children, who are often moved between staff in their rooms. As a result, staff do not understand children's individual care needs. Additionally, not all parents are aware of who their child's key person is.
- The manager has a clear ambition for the curriculum in the nursery, however this is ineffective. Children's progress in their learning is inadequate. Staff knowledge of what children know and can do is variable. For younger children, the progress in communication and language is poor. Staff know that children need more support in this area of their learning. However, they offer too little support and teaching is ineffective. Consequently, children are not able to share ideas with staff or talk with their friends. At times, this leads to children becoming frustrated.
- Staff make regular checks of the progress children make. They share children's achievements with parents. However, when gaps in children's learning are identified, too little is done to address this. The managers lack of oversight, means staff are not supported to put in place targeted support for children and check the impact of this. Gaps in children's progress continue to widen, particularly for those children who are disadvantaged.
- Children enjoy opportunities to be active and to learn about healthy lifestyles. Staff help toddlers learn how to balance along low level beams. Babies enjoy trying new foods as they gain confidence in feeding themselves. Older children learn about the importance of sun safety as they put on sun cream and drink water to rehydrate themselves in warmer weather.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are not effective.

The provider's staff recruitment routines do not ensure the suitability of staff working at the nursery. The manager has not identified gaps in staff's safeguarding knowledge. This compromises children's safety. Staff are unaware of local safeguarding partnership reporting procedures. They have poor knowledge of the possible signs and indicators of abuse and neglect that may suggest a child is at risk of harm. Staff are unaware of wider safeguarding issues, such as if a child was

at risk of being drawn into radicalisation or extremism. Staff are unclear about the procedures to follow in the event of an allegation against a child or adult in the absence of the manager.

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 all staff receive training about the safeguarding policy and procedure, so that they gain a confident understanding of how to recognise and respond to any concerns about children or other staff, including who to report these to, outside of the setting	27/05/2022
ensure that systems for recruitment and establishing the suitability of staff to have contact with children are robust and effective, with particular regard to obtaining references for all staff	27/05/2022
ensure all staff, including the manager, receive effective support, coaching and training to fulfil their roles, to identify and target weaker aspects of knowledge and improve their personal effectiveness, particularly with regard to providing more support for younger children's communication skills	27/05/2022
implement an effective key-person system to meet all children's individual care needs and build relationships with their parents	27/05/2022
improve senior leaders' knowledge and understanding of significant events that must be reported to Ofsted.	27/05/2022

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

	Due date
ensure that staff understand the role of the key person, to ensure that they provide children with the tailored care and learning they need, particularly for babies and younger children	27/05/2022
ensure staff understand the individual needs and stages of development of each child to improve the quality of teaching and use of activities to support younger children's communication and language development effectively	27/05/2022
improve staff assessment of children's progress to ensure they focus on the identified gaps in their learning to planning clear intentions to target teaching and ensure gaps in children's learning close quickly.	27/05/2022

Setting details

Unique reference number	127300
Local authority	Kent
Inspection number	10240065
Type of provision	Childcare on non-domestic premises
Registers	Early Years Register
Day care type	Full day care
Age range of children at time of inspection	0 to 4
Total number of places	104
Number of children on roll	104
Name of registered person	Busy Bees Nurseries Limited
Registered person unique reference number	RP900821
Telephone number	01474 813076
Date of previous inspection	6 April 2018

Information about this early years setting

Busy Bees Day Nursery at Meopham registered in 1993 and is part of the Busy Bees chain of nurseries. The nursery opens each weekday from 8am to 6pm, throughout the year. The nursery employs 31 members of staff, 26 of whom hold appropriate early years qualifications. The nursery is in receipt of funding to provide free early education for two-, three- and four-year-old children.

Information about this inspection

Inspectors

Tara Naylor
Gwendolyn Andrews

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.
- We carried out this inspection as a result of a risk assessment, following information we received about the provider.
- The manager joined the inspectors on a learning walk and talked to the inspectors about their curriculum and what they want their children to learn.
- The inspectors observed the quality of education being provided, indoors and outdoors, and assessed the impact that this was having on children's learning.
- The inspector carried out joint observations of group activities with the manager.
- The inspector spoke to several parents during the inspection and took account of their views.
- The inspectors looked at relevant documentation and reviewed 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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