

Inspection of Hedgehogs Rochester

The Annexe Fort Pitt House, New Road, Rochester, Kent ME1 1DX

Inspection date: 24 June 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

Leaders do not ensure that all staff working with children fully understand the nursery's risk assessments and behaviour management policy. Subsequent weaknesses in staff's practice and knowledge compromise children's safety and learning. During a walk to the park, not all aspects of the agreed risk assessment for outings are followed. For example, very young children climb without adequate supervision and are at risk of falling and hurting themselves.

Children's behaviour is not managed consistently. Staff working with older children do not always ensure they can see what is happening and what all children are doing. This means that when children find it hard to manage their behaviour, other children are at risk of harm. For example, children do not always have the support they need when their emotions and feelings overwhelm them. However, staff are quick to cuddle and soothe babies when they are upset or feeling tired. Children form good bonds with staff.

Children do not benefit from a well-planned and sequenced curriculum. Staff do not take good enough account of children's individual abilities or what they need to learn next. This means that children are not challenged or focused on making as much progress as they could. Staff do not consistently implement learning plans for children with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). This leads to some children not receiving the concentrated attention they need from staff to fully engage in the curriculum.

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

- Leaders do not ensure that their ethos and curriculum are embedded into staff's practice. They do not have a robust oversight of the quality of teaching and learning in the nursery. Although staff have some supervision and support, it is not effective enough to help improve their skills and knowledge. This means children's learning is potentially compromised. Leaders make plans for improvement and are keen to introduce a new curriculum that ignites children's curiosity. However, significant weaknesses in practice remain.
- Leaders do not maintain accurate records for the safe running of the nursery. For example, complaints have not been dealt with in a timely manner, in line with the nursery's complaints policy. Some accident and incident forms have not been filled in with the times they occurred. The manager has not checked that all staff have read and understood policies and procedures during their induction into the nursery. Some areas of the nursery are not adequately risk assessed. For instance, a door is propped open and shuts when a child runs into it. This risks their fingers becoming trapped, or smaller children not being able to get out of the room.

- Staff do not have clear intentions for children's learning. Consequently, activities often lack focus and children are not highly engaged. For example, during a group activity, staff do not plan sufficient resources to maintain the children's interest and initial enthusiasm. Children are not supported to build on what they know and can do.
- Staff are kind, caring and fond of children. However, they are sometimes overly focused on tasks that take them away from the needs of the children, such as tidying up, setting up for lunch or clearing up. Some staff find it difficult to shift their attention to children who need their support, such as if they are upset or want an adult to join in with their play.
- Children love to help cook the nursery meals. Older children chop vegetables, and babies help to make the bread. Children talk about what they are making with staff and about healthy foods. They feel pride when others enjoy eating the food they have prepared.
- Children enjoy playing outside. They improve and practise their physical skills. For example, they dig in the mud, draw with chalk on the fence and balance on planks. Babies have a safe space to roll balls, throw beanbags and pull themselves up to standing. Young children pour water down guttering and watch it drop through a colander. They develop their curiosity when they explore and discover.
- Staff provide some activities that are appealing to children. Older children make 'volcanoes' from household ingredients. They are interested and excited as they create a solution that fizzes and bubbles. Babies like to dig and to feel the texture of the flour and oil mixture. Children enjoy singing and listening to stories with staff. Staff weave in information about children keeping their teeth clean when they re-enact the story of 'Red Riding Hood'. Children enjoy listening to stories with staff throughout the day.
- On the whole, parents say that their children are happy coming to the nursery. They say that the staff are caring and attentive, and they value the daily feedback they receive. However, parents do not always know what their children are learning and how they can support this at home. Parents are not always aware if their children require additional support to help them gain more skills and knowledge.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are not effective.

Ineffective behaviour management and staff practice have a significant impact on children's emotional well-being and safety in the nursery. Some risk assessments are not fully implemented to keep children safe, such as staff ratios when children are on trips away from the nursery. Not all staff have a secure understanding of some safeguarding issues, such as the 'Prevent' duty guidance. This potentially puts children at risk of harm. That said, managers and staff have appropriate knowledge of different kinds of abuse and neglect. They know what to do if they are concerned about a child's welfare and how to whistle-blow should they need to. Safe recruitment procedures help to ensure that staff are suitable to work with

children. However, induction processes for new staff do not always ensure they have a good understanding of the risk assessments in the setting. Some staff hold paediatric first-aid certificates.

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 staff have an up-to-date knowledge of safeguarding issues, such as the 'Prevent' duty guidance reporting procedures	15/07/2022
ensure that risk assessments are robust in identifying and minimising hazards in the environment and throughout the day, including when children are on trips out	15/07/2022
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	15/07/2022
develop processes for staff's induction so that all staff gain secure knowledge of their role and responsibilities, including the actions to take to safeguard children	15/07/2022
ensure that staff are deployed effectively at all times to keep children safe and ensure their needs are met	15/07/2022
introduce effective arrangements for managing children's behaviour to ensure all children are safe	15/07/2022
improve the quality of education by precisely planning more challenging experiences for children to extend their learning	15/07/2022

provide parents with more information about their children's progress and next steps in learning so they can further support their children's learning at home	15/07/2022
implement the nursery's complaint policy when a complaint is made, ensuring there is an outcome that can be shared within the timescales laid out in the policy	15/07/2022
improve leadership oversight of the setting to raise the quality of the provision.	15/07/2022

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

- plan group times for older children more effectively to promote their social and listening skills.

Setting details

Unique reference number	2630755
Local authority	Medway
Inspection number	10242517
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	33
Number of children on roll	70
Name of registered person	Hedgehogs Childcare (Kent and Medway) Ltd
Registered person unique reference number	2630759
Telephone number	01634 953743
Date of previous inspection	Not applicable

Information about this early years setting

Hedgehogs Rochester registered in 2021 and is in Rochester, Kent. The nursery is one of a chain of settings owned by Hedgehogs Childcare (Kent and Medway) Ltd. The nursery provides care from 7.30am to 6.30pm, Monday to Friday, all year round. It provides free early education funding for children aged two, three and four years old. There are 12 staff working in the nursery, of whom seven hold a relevant childcare qualification from level 3 to level 4. The manager holds a qualification at level 3.

Information about this inspection

Inspector

Alison Martin

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 manager joined the inspector on a learning walk and talked to the inspector about their curriculum and what they want children to learn.
- The inspector observed the quality of education being provided, indoors and outdoors, and assessed the impact that this was having on children's learning.
- The inspector joined some staff and children on a walk to the local park.
- Staff and children spoke to the inspector during the inspection. Parents shared their views on the setting with the inspector.
- The manager and the inspector carried out a joint observation of a group activity.
- The inspector 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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