

Inspection of The Cottages Pre-School

54 King Street, LEICESTER LE1 6RL

Inspection date: 2 August 2022

Overall effectiveness

Inadequate

The quality of education

Requires improvement

Behaviour and attitudes

Requires improvement

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 well-being is compromised. This is because leadership and management are weak. Some staff who lead the setting on a daily basis, lack the knowledge and skills to support children to make good progress. Leaders do not ensure there are enough qualified staff working with the children to adequately support their learning and development. Furthermore, young volunteers care for children without the required supervision from staff. This means children's welfare is not assured. Children are not helped to develop their independence, as staff do not encourage them to try things for themselves. For example, during a painting activity, even though children are capable, staff put aprons on and take them off for the children and wash their hands for them once they finish. Children who become upset during the day are not given the support they need to be able to talk about how they are feeling or regulate their emotions. That said, staff do offer children cuddles and praise.

The majority of children behave well. They follow some routines of the day, such as lining up to go upstairs and waiting their turn to play in different spaces. However, staff's boundaries and expectations for children are not consistent. Children run in the setting, as they are unclear this is not acceptable. Some staff say, 'Don't run', others do not. Staff do not understand how to support all children make the progress they are capable of. The activities offered do not consistently challenge or enable them to build on what they already know and can do. Despite this, children play happily and enjoy their time at the setting. Staff interact well with children and provide some appropriate activities. Children enjoy copying a picture of a rainbow using glue and small pieces of tissue paper. They discuss with staff how a rainbow is made and the colours it contains.

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

- The manager does not have a clear understanding of recent changes to the early years foundation stage or how these should be delivered. This impacts on her ability to support staff in helping all children make good progress across all areas of learning.
- Staff regularly assess what children can do, and plan to engage them through what interests them. However, not enough focus is given to what children need to learn next. Furthermore, leaders do not monitor how well staff use information gained through their assessments to support children's learning. This results in much of the learning being incidental. At times, the learning planned for children who may need additional support is not good enough. Staff do not routinely identify gaps in children's development.
- Leaders do not make sure that staff have the knowledge, skills and qualifications needed to effectively implement the setting's chosen curriculum. Leaders explain

that staff should allow children to make choices in their play. However, when children decide to paint with their hands rather than a paint brush, staff tell them not to and wash their hands.

- Staff do talk to children about what they are doing. They help them make a train track and encourage them to think about what they might see on a train journey. Staff help children make animal sounds and use their imagination as they play with different toy animals. However, at times, staff do not interact with children in a way that supports them to learn new knowledge and skills. They ask children very basic questions and do not always give them time to think and respond during conversations.
- Staff use inconsistent strategies to manage children's behaviour. While some children line up to wash their hands, staff allow other children to play on a see-saw, which confuses the children. Some children who need support to share are not given it while others are. Therefore, some children sit for long periods of time waiting for resources and become distressed. However, children get their own plates and cutlery when asked and wait at the table for their dinner. They listen to staff reading stories with some support and know to lie down when they hear staff play the meditation music.
- Staff ask children to write their name in preparation for school. However, less-experienced staff lack the skills to show children how to hold a pen correctly and tell them incorrect information about how to form their letters. This does not consistently support children's early literacy skills.
- Leaders and managers fail to recognise and address gaps in staff's knowledge and skills. Therefore, staff do not receive the training and coaching they need to develop their practice in order to improve the quality of teaching.
- Parents are happy with the service provided by the setting. They comment positively on staff and how they communicate about what children have been doing during the day.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are not effective.

Leaders do not make sure anyone under the age of 17 working with the children is supervised at all times. Furthermore, they do not ensure there are enough qualified members of staff working directly with the children. However, staff and leaders attend training to keep their safeguarding knowledge up to date. They demonstrate a good understanding of the signs and symptoms a child may be at risk of harm. Staff and leaders know how to record, monitor, and report any concerns to the relevant professionals. Leaders have a recruitment procedure in place to assess the suitability of all staff. The site is safe and secure and has clear visitor procedures. Staff check the environment regularly to ensure it is a safe place for children to play. All staff receive first-aid training and know how to help children if they have an accident or become ill.

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 the required number of qualified staff are in place and that staffing arrangements, including how staff and leaders are deployed, meet the needs of children, including supervising anyone under the age of 17 at all times	30/08/2022
ensure gaps in leaders' and staff's ability to effectively implement the curriculum are identified and closed; and put timely training and coaching in place for staff to improve leadership and teaching	30/08/2022
help staff to develop the skills needed to manage children's behaviour appropriately and consistently; give children the support they need to manage their feelings and behaviour	30/08/2022
provide children with enough opportunities to develop resilience and independence, so that they are able and confident to try things for themselves	30/08/2022
improve the consistency in how staff plan and provide challenging learning opportunities for children, across all the areas of learning, that build upon what children already know and can do.	30/08/2022

Setting details

Unique reference number	EY375589
Local authority	Leicester
Inspection number	10248536
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	3 to 8
Total number of places	100
Number of children on roll	26
Name of registered person	The D.H. Nursery Ltd
Registered person unique reference number	RP521841
Telephone number	0116 223 6357
Date of previous inspection	27 August 2015

Information about this early years setting

The Cottages Pre-School, Leicester, registered in 2008. The nursery opens Monday to Friday, 7.45am until 6pm all year round, closing at Christmas and bank holidays. The nursery receives funding for free early education for children aged three- and four-years-old. Of the three staff who work at the nursery, two hold relevant qualifications at level 3 and above.

Information about this inspection

Inspector

Lora Teague

Inspection activities

- This was the first routine inspection the setting 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 the evaluation of the setting.
- The manager and inspector conducted a learning walk together, discussing the learning intention for children and how the environment is arranged.
- The manager and inspector observed and evaluated an activity.
- The inspector observed staff and children of all ages through the setting.
- The inspector held discussions with staff and leaders regularly during the inspection.
- Parents' and carers' views were taken into consideration.
- A sample of documents were reviewed, including paediatric first-aid certificates, suitability checks, and safeguarding policies and procedures.

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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