

Inspection of Sparkling Stars Day Nursery

31-33 Farriers Way, Borehamwood, Hertfordshire WD6 2TB

Inspection date: 9 September 2022

Overall effectiveness

Requires improvement

The quality of education

Requires improvement

Behaviour and attitudes

Requires improvement

Personal development

Requires improvement

Leadership and management

Requires improvement

Overall effectiveness at previous
inspection

Inadequate

What is it like to attend this early years setting?

The provision requires improvement

Overall, the quality of education across the nursery is not at a consistently good standard. There have been recent significant changes to the staff team. As a result, there are a number of less-experienced staff members who do not have all the skills required to help children make good progress. Despite this, children are happy. If children struggle to settle, they receive gentle support from the friendly staff team. This helps them to feel comforted, and they quickly engage in their play.

Babies enjoy the warm interactions from the established staff team in the baby room. They turn to the room leader for cuddles and reassurance. Staff meet the personal care needs of the babies sensitively. For example, they sing nursery rhymes to them as they change their nappies. This helps babies to feel secure in their surroundings. Children behave positively. They are keen to help with tasks. For instance, older babies eagerly help staff to sweep up before lunch.

Toddlers enjoy playing in the enclosed garden, and staff keep them safe. However, the outdoor learning environment is poorly planned and uninspiring. Some children run around with little focus or purpose to their learning, and staff do not intervene to refocus them. Children sometimes engage in activities led by more experienced and established staff. For instance, they play parachute games together, moving the parachute up and down with enjoyment.

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

- Children enjoy activities indoors. Babies learn new words as staff talk to them. Older children enjoy creating their own potions, learning the names of the herbs they use. However, staff do not extend older children's learning. For instance, some staff talk to children about colours but do not extend the conversation. Instead, they ask children if they would like to move on to another activity. This limits children's ability to deepen their knowledge further.
- Established staff members have taken on bigger roles. Room leaders now also hold more senior positions, including the deputy manager role. The room leaders are currently the key person for every child in their room, which means they carry the burden of responsibility because the manager has not distributed the workload more evenly. As a result, some staff are not fully aware of children's individual needs.
- The manager has made changes to the way that staff plan for children's learning and development. Key persons identify appropriate next steps in children's learning and plan activities based on children's interests. However, this information is not communicated with the wider staff team. This means that not all staff are aware of what children know and can already do. This limits their

ability to provide children with meaningful and purposeful interactions to build on their existing knowledge.

- The new manager is enthusiastic and committed to building on the improvements that have taken place since the previous inspection. Staff have access to professional development online and some unqualified staff are starting formal qualifications. However, the manager does not ensure that some staff's professional development is focused sufficiently on improving their teaching skills. This leads to inconsistencies in the quality of the interactions children receive from staff.
- Communication with parents has improved since the new manager started. She has made this a priority, and parents feel well informed about their children's time at the nursery. Parents comment that they receive support to help their children at home. The manager has an effective system in place to address any concerns that parents raise. She values their comments and implements suggestions where possible.
- The manager frequently works directly with children to meet the required staffing ratios. This means that she has limited time to monitor staff's performance. As a result, she is not always able to identify any weaknesses in staff practice and provide rapid support.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Significant improvements have been made to staff understanding of how to keep children safe. The manager now checks the knowledge of her staff team regularly. All staff complete relevant safeguarding training. Staff are able to recognise the signs and symptoms of abuse and neglect. They are aware of wider safeguarding issues, such as how to identify children who may be at risk of exposure to extreme views or behaviours. Staff are aware of how to raise concerns regarding a colleague. They are confident about how to raise these concerns to external agencies should they need to.

What does the setting need to do to improve?

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

	Due date
provide staff with effective support and focused professional development opportunities to improve their teaching skills and raise the quality of their interactions with children across the nursery to a consistently good level	21/10/2022

ensure that all staff understand children's individual needs, interests and abilities so that they can plan meaningful and challenging opportunities to build on what children know and can already do	21/10/2022
improve the planning for the outdoor area and support staff to deliver a good-quality curriculum outside.	21/10/2022

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

- strengthen the monitoring of staff practice so that weaknesses can be swiftly identified and appropriate support can be put in place in a timely manner
- develop the key-person system further to share the responsibility of this role throughout the wider staff team and to strengthen staff's understanding of children's individual needs and abilities.

Setting details

Unique reference number	EY415259
Local authority	Hertfordshire
Inspection number	10236883
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	1 to 3
Total number of places	62
Number of children on roll	30
Name of registered person	Sparklestars Limited
Registered person unique reference number	2655429
Telephone number	07884182777
Date of previous inspection	14 March 2022

Information about this early years setting

Sparkling Stars Day Nursery registered in 2010. The nursery employs nine members of staff, six of whom hold appropriate early years qualifications at level 3 or above. The nursery opens from Monday to Friday, all year round. Opening times are from 7.30am to 6pm. The nursery provides funded early education for two- and three-year-old children.

Information about this inspection

Inspector

Jenny Hardy

Inspection activities

- The inspector discussed any continued impact of the pandemic with the provider and has taken that into account in their evaluation of the provider.
- The manager and inspector completed a learning walk together and discussed the early years curriculum.
- The inspector and manager jointly observed the interactions of staff with children. They discussed the impact of these interactions on children's learning and development.
- The inspector held discussions with parents of children who attend the nursery and took their views into consideration.
- The inspector viewed a range of documentation, including staff suitability and recruitment documents.

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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