

# Inspection of Muddy Boots 'Snowdrop Cottage'

Memorial Hall, Bexhill Road, Ninfield, East Sussex TN33 9EE

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Inspection date: 26 September 2022

<b>Overall effectiveness</b>	<b>Inadequate</b>
The quality of education	<b>Good</b>
Behaviour and attitudes	<b>Good</b>
Personal development	<b>Inadequate</b>
Leadership and management	<b>Inadequate</b>
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Not applicable

## **What is it like to attend this early years setting?**

### **The provision is inadequate**

Children settle quickly and happily engage in their learning and play at the nursery. However, there is a significant breach of requirements, which does not ensure children's safety and welfare. Staff do not consistently risk assess all areas of the nursery effectively. Children spend a significant amount of time outdoors, and they enjoy exploring the local community for themselves. They investigate the seasons and bring back resources, such as flowers, seeds and pinecones, to use in their play. Children seek staff out for cuddles and reassurance, showing that have formed clear bonds and feel safe.

Staff know the interests, likes and dislikes of the children well. They are able to comfort children and provide a curriculum that they enjoy. Children engage in all activities well and take care to include their friends and share resources with them. They pass each other ingredients to make cloud dough and share out raisins at snack time. The curriculum is designed to challenge children and further their learning through questions and explorative play. They enjoy learning new skills, such as woodwork, and exploring new textures with foam and paint. Staff encourage good early independence skills, so that children can put their own coats on, pour their own drinks and confidently follow the routines of the day.

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

- Staff complete risk assessments. However, these are not effective in ensuring that all risks in the environment are removed, to ensure children are not exposed to serious risk of injury. A piece of sharp glass was found in the children's outdoor play area, where they had been engaging in play that morning. This poses the risk of being fallen on or being swallowed by younger children. This does not ensure that staff maintain children's safety at all times.
- Staff design a curriculum that supports all children to access a variety of activities and life experiences. This helps children to build on the knowledge they already have and to deepen their understanding. For example, they explore which animals could have eaten a sunflower's seeds by exploring nature and wild animals.
- Staff support children with special educational needs and/or disabilities to access the curriculum and to feel safe and settled. They use funding to provide specialist equipment, such as light boxes and other sensory toys, to aid their settling and comfort. They also support all children in using sign language to be better able to communicate with their peers. This supports all children to feel included and to make good progress.
- Staff are good at explaining activities and learning so that all children know what they are doing. They model new language well and encourage children to explore and question things for themselves. For example, when making sensory

cloud dough, they introduce the words 'spice', 'smooth' and 'silky' when discussing the scent and texture. This expands vocabulary and aids communication and language development.

- The provider has a clear intent for the curriculum; however, this is not shared effectively with staff. Activities provide fun and engaging learning opportunities but are not always targeted to provide children with progress in their identified learning areas.
- Staff are consistent with their expectations for behaviour. Children enjoy playing together. They giggle as they show each other how to jump and smile as they share puppets for 'The Hungry Caterpillar' story book. This supports them well to begin to understand their own behaviours and to engage positively in learning.
- Children show good resilience to setbacks. They seek comfort from staff when they fall and then quickly return to the same activity to continue practising their jumping skills. This supports children well for future learning.
- The provider supported families well throughout the COVID-19 pandemic. She identified emerging needs of families and children and adapted the setting and ways of working accordingly. This supported all families to return in a settled way with additional reassurance provided.
- The provider ensures that she supports her staff in identifying any training needs to further develop their practice. She also takes care to be sensitive and supportive of personal needs and well-being. This means that staff are happy and able to provide a good quality of care and education to all children.
- The provider and staff have strong links with parents. Parents say that the experiences their children have at the nursery 'are above and beyond what I would have expected' and 'you can guarantee, rain or shine, the children will be outside exploring.' These strong links support children to have a continuity of care and learning.

## Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are not effective.

Due to weaknesses in risk assessment, children's welfare is compromised. However, staff have a clear understanding of child protection issues and their roles in safeguarding all children. Staff are clear about the importance of making prompt referrals should they have any concerns about a child or adult. The manager follows safer recruitment procedures to ensure that staff are, and continue to be, suitable to work with children.

## 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 staff take all reasonable steps to make certain that children are not exposed to risks and that risk assessments are completed effectively.	03/10/2022
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**To further improve the quality of the early years provision, the provider should:**

- support staff to better understand the manager's intent for the curriculum so that activities are supporting children to gain progress in their identified areas.

## Setting details

<b>Unique reference number</b>	2593325
<b>Local authority</b>	East Sussex
<b>Inspection number</b>	10249191
<b>Type of provision</b>	Childcare on non-domestic premises
<b>Registers</b>	Early Years Register, Compulsory Childcare Register, Voluntary Childcare Register
<b>Day care type</b>	Full day care
<b>Age range of children at time of inspection</b>	1 to 3
<b>Total number of places</b>	21
<b>Number of children on roll</b>	22
<b>Name of registered person</b>	Muddy Boots Home-Based & Environmental Childcare Ltd
<b>Registered person unique reference number</b>	2574135
<b>Telephone number</b>	07920558503
<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	Not applicable

## Information about this early years setting

Muddy Boots 'Snowdrop Cottage' nursery registered in May 2020. It operates from Snowdrop Cottage, attached to the Memorial Hall in Ninfield, East Sussex. The nursery is open from Monday to Friday, 8am to 5.30pm, for 45 weeks of the year. The setting employs 6 members of staff, of whom one holds a level 6 qualification, one holds a level 5 qualification, two hold a level 4 qualification, one holds a level 3 qualification, and one is unqualified. The setting receives funding for the provision of free early education for children aged two, three and four years.

## Information about this inspection

**Inspector**  
Nina Harvey

## 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 and inspector completed a learning walk together and discussed the early years curriculum.
- 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 manager and inspector carried out a joint observation and spoke with staff.
- Parents shared their views of the nursery with the inspector.

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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