

Inspection of The Little Kingdom Nursery and Preschool

Baptist Church, Charlton Kings, Cheltenham, Gloucestershire GL53 8AR

Inspection date:

5 October 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

Good

What is it like to attend this early years setting?

The provision is inadequate

The provider, who is also the manager, has failed to monitor the nursery sufficiently to identify and address weaknesses in staff practice with regards to risk assessments, staff deployment and supervision of children. In addition, the provider is also the designated safeguarding lead (DSL) and has failed to follow safeguarding procedures, as she has not notified other agencies of allegations made against staff. These failures put children's safety and well-being at risk.

The curriculum is not coherently planned or sequenced. The provider does not ensure that staff plan purposeful activities that focus on children's individual next steps in learning to help them achieve. She does not ensure that staff support the individual learning needs of all children well enough. This includes some children who speak English as an additional language and some with additional needs. This means that staff fail to help children catch up when they are falling behind.

Staff are friendly, kind and caring, and children snuggle up to them for cuddles, for instance when they are tired. However, although staff provide some comfort to unsettled children, they do not encourage them to join in with activities to increase their enjoyment and learning. As a result, some children spend long periods wandering aimlessly and become upset. Nevertheless, children can explore the resources on offer and benefit from fresh air and exercise throughout the day. Staff help some older children to think critically. For example, during a water activity, staff encourage a small group of children to find different resources in the garden and to consider whether they will float or sink. Children take turns to put resources in the water to test out their ideas. Some older children show an interest in numbers. Staff support them to accurately count pictures of animals on cards and to recognise numerals under 10.

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

- The provider does not have an adequate understanding of her role as the DSL and does not contact the local authority designated officer (LADO) when concerns are raised about staff. This compromises children's welfare.
- The provider does not have adequate oversight of the quality of the provision. She does not monitor staff's practice or the curriculum sufficiently and does not provide staff with the support they need to raise the quality of teaching and learning to a consistently good standard.
- Staff do not always assess potential risk effectively or supervise babies closely enough. For example, staff put babies down to sleep on floor mats in the playroom where other babies play. Staff do not consider the hazard of placing a sleeping baby next to a ball pit. They do not notice that babies throw the balls out of the pit, which land on the sleeping baby, placing children's safety and

well-being at risk. Staff strap babies in highchairs at mealtimes and give them bowls of food. However, staff do not supervise babies vigilantly enough. They have their backs to the babies for several minutes while they serve food and attend to other children, and would not notice if a baby choked.

- The new special educational needs coordinator (SENCo) is enthusiastic and proactive in their role to identify children that need extra support. Gaps are closing for some children with delays in their development. However, some children with English as an additional language and others who need extra help do not yet receive enough support or attention from staff. These children are at risk of falling further behind in their education, as they spend long periods exploring resources by themselves, without any staff input.
- Some whole-group activities are not delivered well and do not support all children's enjoyment, engagement and learning. The provider and staff enthusiastically sing action songs but do not actively encourage children to join in. Younger children sit alone and look bemused during most of the activity, while some move away to explore other resources independently. Staff introduce musical instruments and finger puppets to the activity. However, when some younger children try to snatch musical instruments from each other, and others throw finger puppets around, this inappropriate behaviour goes unchallenged by staff.
- The provider aspires for children to develop their independence and self-care skills from an early age, in readiness for school. However, at times, staff do things for children during daily routines that they are capable of doing for themselves. For example, staff pour drinks into cups and put pieces of toast and fruit directly onto the table in front of older children, rather than encouraging children to help themselves to food and put it onto plates.
- Children develop their physical skills. Babies pull themselves up to standing and push walkers around the room. Toddlers show control and coordination as they begin to persevere when constructing with plastic blocks. Children concentrate as they mix ingredients to make pretend cakes and carry their bowls carefully to the toy oven. Staff encourage them to 'have a go' at unscrewing lids on tubes of coloured icing and to squeeze out the icing to decorate their 'cake'.
- Children have opportunities to experiment with a variety of media and materials. Older children mix paint and roll conkers in it to create artwork. Staff encourage children to recall the outing when they found the conkers, helping them to make links in their learning. Some children proudly talk to visitors about the outing and their creations, showing developing language skills and confidence in social situations. Younger children enjoy rolling fluffy balls down pieces of guttering, supported by staff. Staff ask children questions, such as, 'What does the ball feel like?' but do not give them time to think and respond before asking another question.
- Since the COVID-19 pandemic restrictions have been lifted, parents are welcomed into the nursery to drop off and collect their children. Staff and parents share information about children during handovers and through an online platform. Parents comment positively about the home visits from staff and settling-in visits before children start.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are not effective.

The provider does not fully understand her role and responsibility, as the DSL, to report any concerns about staff to the LADO. This is not in line with the local safeguarding partnership's procedures or the nursery's policy and procedures. This, together with weaknesses in identifying and minimising hazards around sleeping babies, and in supervising babies vigilantly when they are eating, compromises children's welfare. The provider follows safer recruitment procedures to ensure new staff are suitable to work with children. Staff are clear of the procedures to follow should they have concerns about a child's welfare.

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 the designated safeguarding lead has sufficient knowledge and understanding of the procedures to follow in the event of an allegation made against staff, in line with the local safeguarding partnership's procedures and the nursery's policy and procedures	19/10/2022
ensure that staff identify and minimise hazards to children, with particular regard to sleeping children in the baby room area, to support their safety and well-being	19/10/2022
ensure that staff are deployed effectively to supervise children closely when they are eating and sleeping, to help keep them safe	19/10/2022
monitor staff performance effectively and provide staff with focused training, support and coaching, to raise the quality of teaching to a consistently good level	23/12/2022

improve planning across the curriculum to ensure that activities are purposeful and tailored towards children's individual next steps in learning, to help them make good progress	23/12/2022
improve the support for children who need additional help, including those who speak English as an additional language, to ensure that they receive the assistance they need to make good progress in their learning and development.	02/11/2022

Setting details

Unique reference number	EY449695
Local authority	Gloucestershire
Inspection number	10254440
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	1 to 3
Total number of places	24
Number of children on roll	35
Name of registered person	Pearson, Laura Jane
Registered person unique reference number	RP516332
Telephone number	07496054192
Date of previous inspection	5 July 2017

Information about this early years setting

The Little Kingdom Nursery and Preschool registered in 2012. It is located at a Baptist church in Charlton Kings, in Cheltenham, Gloucestershire. The nursery and pre-school operate each weekday, all year round, except for bank holidays and one week between Christmas and New Year. Opening hours are from 8am to 6pm. The provider receives funding for free early education for children aged two, three and four years. The provider employs six staff members who work directly with the children. The provider/manager holds early years teacher status. Three other staff members hold a relevant early years qualification at level 3, and three are unqualified.

Information about this inspection

Inspector
Karen Allen

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 provider joined the inspector on a learning walk and talked to the inspector about 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.
- Children spoke to the inspector during the inspection.
- The inspector talked to parents, staff and the SENCo at appropriate times during the inspection and took account of their views.
- The provider and the inspector carried out a joint observation of an activity outdoors.
- 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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