

# Inspection of Hardwicke Early Years

Hardwicke Parochial Primary Academy, Poplar Way, Gloucester GL2 4QG

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Inspection date: 7 December 2022

## **Overall effectiveness**

## **Inadequate**

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The quality of education

**Requires improvement**

Behaviour and attitudes

**Requires improvement**

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

Children's safety is compromised. Leaders and staff do not have a good enough understanding of how to safeguard children. The designated safeguarding leads do not know the correct procedure to follow if there is an allegation made against a member of staff. Not all staff have a clear understanding of the signs of physical abuse. The setting gathers useful information from parents when children start. For example, identifying external agencies that are working with children and parents. However, leaders fail to use this information to ensure the welfare of children.

Children's health and hygiene are not supported. For example, they share food from a communal plate on the table at snack time. Children chew fruit then place it back on the plate, and other children then eat it. Staff fail to notice this happening even though they do sit with children at mealtimes.

Despite these weaknesses, children are happy. They have formed close relationships with each other and staff. Staff talk about children's likes and dislikes, and know children well. Not all staff use effective behaviour management strategies to help children receive consistent and positive messages about how to behave. Children look forward to their play, although, at times, not all activities are planned well enough.

The setting has a small area outside for children to play in. They can use the school playground on occasions. Children have opportunities to climb, balance and develop core muscle strength. For example, staff create an obstacle course which children enjoy. However, staff deploy themselves ineffectively. This means there are not enough staff outside to ensure children are fully supported in their learning.

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

- The manager can explain what she wants children to learn and why. However, not all staff implement the curriculum effectively. For example, staff do not always focus on what children need to learn next. This means children's individual learning needs are not consistently met. Not all children are challenged in their learning and development.
- Teaching is inconsistent. Not all staff have the skills and knowledge to inspire children's learning. For example, staff encourage children to use simple signs to represent initial sounds. However, they do not know the signs themselves. This means staff do not look at the children during the group activity as they check how to make the sign from a list. Children then lose interest and motivation.
- Staff are not consistent when supporting younger children's behaviour. When children do not want to go where asked, staff are inconsistent in how they respond. For example, some staff distract children and ask if they want a hug.

Some staff pick children up and move them without telling them what they are doing or why. These mixed messages mean that children do not have a clear understanding of staff's expectations for their behaviour.

- Children with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) receive support from staff. The special educational needs coordinator has identified that some children need additional support from external professionals. However, the setting takes too long to refer children or plan a curriculum that meets their particular needs. When the setting does seek advice, it does not act on this advice quickly enough.
- Older children are generally independent and confident. They enter the setting with a smile on their face. They are warmly welcomed by staff, and separate from their parents well. Staff provide praise and encouragement to children. They prepare activities based on children's interests. However, staff do not deploy themselves effectively. For example, some staff often remain static in the room, choosing an activity and staying there. This means younger children do not always receive enough adult interaction and support as they wander around the room.
- Parents comment that the setting communicates well and shares information about their children's learning. For example, they confirm they have received their child's two-year-old check. Parents share that they feel a key strength of the setting is the friendliness of staff. They praise the relationships their children make when they attend.
- Staff generally say they feel supported by the manager. They receive regular supervision and are beginning to engage in peer-to-peer observations. However, some staff lack the skills, knowledge and training to ensure the welfare, learning and development of the children in their care. The manager does not always identify weaknesses in practice or provide precise enough feedback to staff to raise the quality of teaching. When she does identify weaknesses, she does not always know how to mentor staff to make positive changes in their practice.
- The manager's knowledge of safeguarding is not secure enough. These weaknesses mean she is not in a good position to give staff guidance and support as needed. This does not ensure children's welfare effectively.

## **Safeguarding**

The arrangements for safeguarding are not effective.

Not all staff have a good enough understanding of signs and symptoms that children may be at risk of harm and therefore should be referred to external agencies. Staff and designated safeguarding leads have attended appropriate local authority training. However, staff and leaders do not know how to follow local authority guidelines, for example what to do if an allegation is made against a member of staff. Leaders do not follow up information received in a timely manner to ensure the safety of children in their care.

## **What does the setting need to do to improve?**

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

	<b>Due date</b>
ensure that all designated safeguarding leads have a robust understanding of the appropriate action to take in the event of an allegation against staff, and follow the guidance set out by the local safeguarding authority	16/12/2022
ensure staff can identify children who may be at risk of harm	16/12/2022
ensure that leaders record information and maintain appropriate records and chronologies to safeguard children	16/12/2022
ensure the supervision, coaching and mentoring of staff are effective, so that all staff fully understand how to implement the curriculum	20/01/2023
ensure there are effective arrangements in place to support children with SEND, identifying and responding promptly where there are concerns	20/01/2023
improve the quality of staff interaction and support with children so they are consistently effective in supporting behaviour in an appropriate way, including at mealtimes.	20/01/2023

## Setting details

<b>Unique reference number</b>	2592620
<b>Local authority</b>	Gloucestershire
<b>Inspection number</b>	10251290
<b>Type of provision</b>	Childcare on non-domestic premises
<b>Registers</b>	Early Years Register
<b>Day care type</b>	Full day care
<b>Age range of children at time of inspection</b>	2 to 4
<b>Total number of places</b>	48
<b>Number of children on roll</b>	40
<b>Name of registered person</b>	Hardwicke Playgroup Committee
<b>Registered person unique reference number</b>	RP519912
<b>Telephone number</b>	07724139217
<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	Not applicable

## Information about this early years setting

Hardwicke Early Years registered in 2020 and is based in Hardwicke, Gloucestershire. The setting receives funding for the provision of early education for children aged two, three, and four years. It opens from 9am to 2.45pm Monday to Friday during term time only. There are six staff who work with children, all of whom hold qualifications at level 3. The manager holds an appropriate early years level 3 qualification.

## Information about this inspection

### Inspector

Gwyneth Keen

## 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 manager and has taken that into account in their evaluation of the provision.
- The manager and the inspector completed a learning walk together. The manager shared with the inspector what they want children to learn and how they will do this.
- The inspector and the manager carried out a joint observation of a group activity.
- The inspector spoke to staff and children at appropriate times throughout the inspection.
- The inspector observed the quality of education during activities indoors and outdoors, and assessed the impact this has on children's learning.
- The inspector spoke to parents during the inspection and took account of their views.

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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