

# Inspection of Sheepwash Farm Day Nursery

Sheepwash Farm, Fisherwick Road, Whittington, Lichfield WS14 9JN

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Inspection date: 15 December 2022

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## **Overall effectiveness**

## **Requires improvement**

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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

Not applicable

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

### **The provision requires improvement**

Children are generally settled and content attending the nursery. Staff get to know children well and overall, they manage their care needs sensitively. Children generally behave well as staff use positive strategies to teach them about right and wrong, and manage unwanted behaviours. This helps all children to feel safe in their care. The environment is incredibly unique as it operates on the site of a working farm. The nursery is resourced well, indoors and outside. Staff provide children with opportunities beyond their own experiences, such as helping to care for farm animals and growing vegetables in the allotment. Managers have established really strong community links, which they utilise to benefit children and their families. This helps foster respect for the world they live in and promotes acceptance of those around them. However, the curriculum ethos and new planning approach are not yet embedded. Teaching is variable and staff require further support in this area to help promote consistency and develop their expertise. Young babies benefit from a nurturing environment and enjoy appropriate support as they play with small-world animals and explore the sounds they make. Pre-school children have opportunities to build on their prior knowledge. They delight in hunting and investigating tracks in the snow and then confidently create their own with stampers. However, older babies sometimes wander aimlessly with little support and when they do engage happily in water play, their experience is cut short as staff do not prioritise their learning. Furthermore, on occasions, toddlers flit between self-chosen activities and become increasingly frustrated with staff's inflexibility during some routine activities.

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

- Managers are passionate and they are ambitious. Since registration, they have worked hard to get the nursery up and running and they strive to further develop practice. Recently, managers have introduced a new monitoring system to review the quality of education staff provide along with children's progress. However, this is not yet utilised fully in practice to help promote continuous improvement and the best possible outcomes for all children.
- Managers and staff work closely as a team. Staff comment that they feel well supported by the approachable managers. Managers spend time in the nursery rooms and meet with staff routinely, in both one to one and in teams. However, there is scope to further embed staff supervision, the support available and training related to teaching to help staff upskill and become more reflective practitioners.
- Managers have lots of ideas about the nursery curriculum, but their ethos is not firmly embedded in practice. Staff routinely observe children and assess their abilities. However, they do not always consistently provide a curriculum rich with learning opportunities that are age-appropriate and sharply focused on children's

individual needs, specifically for older babies and toddlers.

- The new planning approach is not yet embedded in practice, specifically in the older baby and toddler rooms. Staff do not always make the most effective use of interactions and teaching opportunities to continually build on older babies' and toddlers' learning to foster their best possible progress.
- Communication and language learning is a key focus throughout nursery, which greatly supports those experiencing a delay in this area. Staff talk to children at their level, ask some appropriate questions and take opportunities to sing and share rhymes. Overall, stories play a big part in the provision. Babies share books with staff and toddlers like focused story sessions with props to bring them to life. Pre-school children enjoy listening to familiar stories, recalling them and using them to inform activities. This helps all children develop a love of reading.
- Pre-school children gain the key skills they need to prepare for school. For example, a whole-group registration requires them to sit and pay attention for a period of time. Staff use the session to introduce letters, sounds and basic mathematics, such as counting. Managers ensure links with local schools are strong and there is a joined up approach to support these transitions.
- Healthy living is prioritised. Children benefit from fresh food from the farm and lots of outdoor activities, including football taught by an external professional. Children also enjoy additional physical activities, such as yoga sessions. Staff teach children to manage their self-care independently as they grow, including using the bathroom and washing their hands. However, transition periods in toddlers' daily routines are not always well considered, so there is scope to improve them. For example, toddlers struggle during lengthy delays at key times, such as returning in from outside or waiting for lunch.
- Parents comment that they are very happy with the quality of provision. Two-way information is shared in varied ways, including the use of an online application. Managers provide lots of opportunities for parents to spend time in the setting, such as a recent Nativity play on the farm and a craft event. This helps to promote some continuity for children between the setting and home.

## Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Children's health and safety is paramount and managers ensure that their unique surroundings are carefully considered. The premises are safe. Staff make effective use of risk assessment checks to minimise any potential hazards. They benefit from additional training, which is continually updated to ensure they are aware of key regulations in place, to manage risks on a working farm. Pre-school children learn how to keep themselves safe, as they talk about road awareness when moving around outside. Daily cleaning is a priority and hygiene regimes are good. Children are well supervised throughout the day. All staff are suitably vetted and benefit from thorough induction. Managers and staff have strong knowledge of how to identify and manage child protection referrals. This helps to keep children safe.

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

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

- refine the curriculum and help staff provide a rich learning environment for children that is age-appropriate and sharply focused on their individual needs, specifically those working with older babies and toddlers
- embed the new planning approach and help staff make the most effective use of interactions and teaching opportunities to continually build on children's learning, specifically older babies and toddlers
- review the daily routine, specifically transition periods at key times in the toddler room and consider ways to help staff adapt practice more readily as needed
- further embed staff supervision, support and training and help staff become more reflective practitioners to help them upskill
- monitor the quality of education staff provide, and children's progress more rigorously to help improve outcomes for all children.

## Setting details

<b>Unique reference number</b>	2602422
<b>Local authority</b>	Staffordshire
<b>Inspection number</b>	10263091
<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>	0 to 4
<b>Total number of places</b>	50
<b>Number of children on roll</b>	69
<b>Name of registered person</b>	Sheepwash Farm Day Nursery Limited
<b>Registered person unique reference number</b>	2602424
<b>Telephone number</b>	01543 433822
<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	Not applicable

## Information about this early years setting

Sheepwash Farm Day Nursery registered in 2020. The nursery employs 12 members of childcare staff. Of these, six hold appropriate early years qualifications at level 3, one holds a relevant childcare degree, one holds early years teacher status and one is a qualified teacher. The nursery operates all year round. Sessions are available Monday to Friday, from 7.30am until 6pm. The nursery provides funded early education for two-, three- and four-year-old children.

## Information about this inspection

### Inspectors

Josephine Heath  
Laura England

## Inspection activities

- This was the first routine inspection the provider received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. Inspectors discussed the impact of the pandemic with the provider and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the provider.
- All areas of the provision were viewed and the management team and inspectors completed a learning walk together of all areas of the nursery and discussed the early years curriculum.
- The inspectors observed the quality of education being provided, indoors and outdoors, and assessed the impact that this was having on children's learning.
- The inspectors talked to staff, parents and children at appropriate times during the inspection and took account of their views.
- The inspectors carried out a joint observation of a pre-school group activity outside with the management team.
- A management meeting was held and the inspectors 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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