

Inspection of The Stables Nursery

The Stables Day Care Nursery, Margaretting Road, Galleywood, CHELMSFORD CM2 8TS

Inspection date: 8 November 2022

Overall effectiveness	Inadequate
The quality of education	Inadequate
Behaviour and attitudes	Inadequate
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 care and learning opportunities staff provide for children are inadequate. The management team do not check that staff complete thorough daily risk assessments. Daily checks fail to ensure that the environment, including outside spaces, are free from hazards that may pose a risk to children. Poor staff deployment fails to ensure children are consistently cared for by staff who have completed suitability checks. For example, during the inspection, babies were left alone with individuals and unqualified staff not known to them. This leaves babies vulnerable, and adults do not know their needs or how to soothe them. Children's good health and welfare are not consistently supported. The management and staff do not demonstrate a good enough understanding of the importance of maintaining a high standard of hygiene and cleanliness.

Children's progress is not sufficiently supported. Staff fail to provide children with an ambitious educational programme that focuses on what they need to learn. Babies and toddlers are unable to explore suitable activities and resources to help encourage their imaginative and investigative skills. Toys are grubby, torn or broken and offer little play value. Staff are not sufficiently aware of babies' and toddlers' interests to support the next steps in their learning. Despite the lack of suitable resources and poor quality of teaching, children behave well.

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

- The management team and staff fail to ensure that all possible hazards are identified and minimised to help keep children safe. The premises, including the surfaces on which food is served, are not consistently fit for purpose. Furniture and resources, particularly in the rooms where toddlers and babies are cared for, are old, tatty and worn out. Old style metal radiators are dirty as is the carpet underneath. The management state that these cannot be cleaned as it would involve removing the radiator covers from the wall. This does not support the younger children's good health and well-being. In addition, some resources in the baby and toddler garden area are broken and dirty. Hazards, such as small bags of stones, are not removed. Rainwater collects in the back of toy cars and pots around the area, which staff fail to clear prior to the garden being used. This compromises children's welfare and safety.
- Staff deployment is not effective. At times, senior members of staff leave the baby room without checking there are suitable staff available to cover them and maintain the ratio requirements. This leaves unqualified staff unable to meet the needs of children.
- The managers fail to implement regular supervision meetings for all staff. Consequently, they have not been able to identify aspects of staff's knowledge and practice that are not good enough, including their understanding of

safeguarding. Staff's teaching skills are variable. For example, staff working in the pre-school room challenge and extend children's learning consistently. They ask questions to help children to think about which puzzle piece goes next. However, staff working with the younger children do not make the most of every opportunity to inspire and support their learning.

- Overall, the educational programme lacks suitable levels of challenge. Activities are boring, mundane and fail to inspire children. This hinders their progress and readiness for the next stage of their learning. Toddlers quickly lose interest in the unsuitable resources, wandering around aimlessly and uninspired. Slightly older children try to connect magnetic poles together to see how high they can get the tower. Staff overlook the opportunity to progress their learning further, such as children's mathematical language. For example, they fail to encourage children to think about whether the tower is taller or shorter than they are.
- The availability and range of resources and activities staff provide for children, particularly the babies and toddlers, fails to excite and engage them. Many of the toys are grubby, torn or broken and offer little play value. For example, children try to build towers with magnetic resources that have rusted. Staff are not sufficiently aware of babies' and toddlers' interests to support the next steps in their learning.
- Staff use an online record system to share information with parents. They upload pictures to show parents what their children have done and suggest ways for them to support their children further at home. Teachers from local schools are able to visit children in the nursery. This helps children to recognise a familiar face when they start school.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are not effective.

The weaknesses in risk assessment and staff's safeguarding knowledge means that children's welfare and well-being are not consistently assured. Some staff fail to demonstrate a clear understanding of the signs that may indicate children are at risk of radicalisation or extremist behaviour. They do not know what to do should they have any concerns about a colleague's conduct. However, generally, most staff know what they should do in the event of any concerns about children in their care. Staff point out posters that contain the contact details of statutory safeguarding authorities.

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
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take action to ensure that all staff have a suitable understanding of all safeguarding matters, including what to do in the event of any concerns about a colleague's conduct	16/12/2022
improve risk assessment procedures to ensure that all possible hazards are regularly identified and minimised to help keep children safe	16/12/2022
take action to improve staff deployment to ensure that children are only supervised by adults who are checked and cleared as suitable	16/12/2022
ensure the premises, including the floors and surfaces where food is served, are regularly checked and cleaned to support children's health and physical well-being	16/12/2022
improve staff's teaching skills to ensure that they make the most of every opportunity to extend children's learning and help them make the best possible progress	16/12/2022
take action to ensure that staff left caring for children understand and meet their individual needs	16/12/2022
improve the range of resources to consistently inspire, excite and challenge children, particularly the toddlers and babies	16/12/2022
take action to ensure staff plan and implement an ambitious curriculum that supports what children need to learn next in order to make good levels of progress	16/12/2022
implement effective arrangements for regular staff supervisions to help develop staff's skills and knowledge.	16/12/2022

Setting details

Unique reference number	204074
Local authority	Essex
Inspection number	10259192
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	0 to 4
Total number of places	120
Number of children on roll	104
Name of registered person	The Stables Nursery Limited
Registered person unique reference number	RP908189
Telephone number	01245 348159
Date of previous inspection	16 November 2016

Information about this early years setting

The Stables Nursery registered in 2000. The nursery employs 18 members of childcare staff. Of these, 15 hold appropriate early years qualifications at level 3 and above. One member of staff holds qualified teacher status. The nursery opens from Monday to Friday, all year round. Sessions are from 8am until 6pm. The nursery provides funded early education for two-, three- and four-year-old children.

Information about this inspection

Inspectors

Sue Buckingham
Lynn Hartigan

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 inspectors viewed the provision and discussed the safety and suitability of the premises.
- The manager joined the inspectors on a learning walk and talked to the inspectors about their curriculum and what they want their children to learn.
- Children spoke to the inspectors during the inspection.
- The inspectors talked to staff at appropriate times during the inspection and took account of their views.
- 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 inspector carried out a joint observation of a communication and language activity with the manager.
- The managers showed the inspector documentation to demonstrate the suitability of staff.
- The inspectors read emails sent in by parents 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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