

Inspection of Bright Horizons Springfield Lodge Dartford Day Nursery and Preschool

Powder Mill Lane, Dartford DA1 1NT

Inspection date: 2 February 2023

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

Weaknesses in staff safeguarding knowledge mean that children's safety is at risk. The nursery management team does not ensure that staff have a thorough understanding of the safeguarding procedures. For instance, staff are unable to speak with confidence about the role of the local authority designated lead (LADO) and their duty to report allegations or concerns about members of staff. This compromises children's safety.

The key-person system is not effective. Children and babies are not supported when they first start to build bonds with their key person. New children spend periods of time upset and not engaged in any play or learning. Staff do not respond to their needs by helping them to settle and feel comfortable in their environment. This impacts on the well-being of the children.

Overall, there is an adequate ratio of staff to children across the nursery. However, staff deployment is not always effective in meeting the individual needs of the children. For example, when children want to go outside to join their friends, staff are unable to organise themselves to allow this to happen. As a result, some children spend periods of time not engaged because they are not where they want to be.

Despite these weaknesses, children do show excitement and levels of engagement outside. They enjoy using the vast space to run and climb. Pre-school children enjoy exploring the forest school area. They take appropriate risks to climb trees and learn about the natural world around them.

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

- The management team has a clear oversight of the curriculum intent for each age group across the setting. However, this is not put into action effectively by the staff team. Independence is part of the curriculum intent from the youngest children right through to pre-school children. However, this is not encouraged effectively or promoted consistently by staff. For example, staff have different expectations across all three pre-school rooms. Some children are encouraged to pour their own drinks and select their own food at lunchtime, whereas in other rooms this is completed for the children. This impacts on the overall intent of the curriculum and staff's understanding of what children need to learn.
- Exceptionally high noise levels across the setting impact on children's well-being and development. Children who are trying to concentrate at activities become distracted. Children feel the need to shout to be heard over the noise. This impacts on children's emerging speech and language development, as they are unable to clearly hear others speak. Newer children become unsettled by the

noise, finding it hard to concentrate or build relationships with other children and adults.

- Children with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) are identified quickly. The knowledgeable special educational needs coordinator (SENCo) liaises with parents and/or carers and the local authority to get children the support they need. External agencies are invited into the nursery to work with children and support staff in setting actions. Children with complex medical needs are well supported. For example, staff have training to understand any medical equipment and how to deal with emergencies.
- The way in which staff manage routines of the day do not enable children to make choices about continuing their play. For example, when the snack trolley arrived, children who were engaged in building with plastic blocks were asked to break up their creations and tidy away. This impacted on their levels of concentration and enjoyment at an activity that was of interest to them. Subsequently, while waiting for staff to get snack ready, the children were not engaged in any meaningful learning and struggled to find something that held their interest. In the toddler room, the children are told when they need to go outside without any warning. This does not give them choice over where they play.
- Babies do not have their individual needs met when they are settling. For instance, new children who have only had a few settling-in visits are not supported to build a bond with their key person. They spend periods of time being upset and unsettled, without the support of adults to engage them in play. Often, babies are passed between adults to try to settle them. This does not empower them to build a positive relationship with their key person. The management team has clear ideas on how they want children to settle, but this is not seen in practice.
- Behaviour management of children is inconsistent across the staff team. The leadership team has clear strategies regarding how they expect staff to deal with unwanted behaviour. However, this is not what is happening in practice. For example, when children start to argue over resources, staff tell children 'no' without giving them support to use their language or resolve the issue between themselves. This means that unwanted behaviour repeats itself because children are not being taught or receiving guidance from staff to regulate their emotions themselves.
- Overall, parents are happy with the nursery. They comment that their children are happy and that staff give regular updates on what their children are learning. They like that staff always greet the children by name and comment that they love the vast outside area that children can explore.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are not effective.

Managers cannot ensure children's safety. This is because staff do not have a thorough understanding of the safeguarding policy and how to report concerns or allegations. Staff have regular training, but this is not fully effective, and their

knowledge is not secure. However, staff can identify areas of abuse and how this may impact on a child. The designated safeguarding lead has a good understanding of her role and responsibilities, but she is not fulfilling her duty to ensure that all staff also have a good understanding. This means that children are at risk and not adequately protected.

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
take action to ensure that all staff understand the safeguarding policies and procedures, including the role of the LADO	17/02/2023
implement an effective key-person system so that staff fulfil their role in ensuring that each child's care is tailored to meet their individual needs, and offer a settled relationship for the child	17/02/2023
ensure that behaviour management strategies are understood by all staff to ensure that children are being supported with a consistent approach	17/02/2023
ensure that staff are adequately deployed to meet the needs of all the children	17/02/2023
take action to implement a clear, sequenced curriculum that is understood by staff and consistently embedded into practice.	17/02/2023

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

- consider ways to reduce the noise levels in the pre-school rooms to help children to maintain concentration and focus on what they are doing
- improve the way that staff manage routines, to minimise disruption to children's engagement in their play and learning.

Setting details

Unique reference number	EY544213
Local authority	Kent
Inspection number	10269775
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	175
Number of children on roll	130
Name of registered person	Bright Horizons Family Solutions Limited
Registered person unique reference number	RP901358
Telephone number	01332 411815
Date of previous inspection	9 November 2017

Information about this early years setting

Springfield Lodge Day Nursery re-registered in 2017. It operates from eight rooms in a purpose-built building on the outskirts of Dartford, Kent. The nursery is open each weekday, from 7am to 6.30pm, for 52 weeks of the year, excluding bank holidays. All children share access to a secure, enclosed outdoor play area. There are 38 members of staff, 33 of whom hold appropriate early years qualifications from NVQ level 2 to level 6. The nursery provides funded early education for three- and four-year olds and receives support from the local authority.

Information about this inspection

Inspectors

Kelly Southern
Nicky Chambers

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 this into account 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 deputy manager, manager and the inspectors completed a learning walk together of all areas of the nursery and discussed the early years curriculum.
- Staff spoke to the inspector during the inspection.
- The inspector spoke to several parents during the inspection and took account of their views.
- 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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