

Inspection of Freshfields Nursery School Ltd

Clifford Forge House, Clifford Road, Stratford-upon-Avon, Warwickshire CV37 8HW

Inspection date: 3 February 2023

Overall effectiveness	Inadequate
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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

Children's health and safety is not fully assured. Managers and staff do not ensure that all fire exits are free from obstruction. Some new staff are not sufficiently trained and confident in enacting the nursery's evacuation procedures. Furthermore, staff do not ensure that nappy changing facilities for young children and toilet areas are clean and well maintained.

The nursery has been experiencing a period of management and staffing instability. Recent management and staff turnover and ongoing staffing issues mean that staff deployment is, at times, ineffective and does not promote children's individual needs. Nevertheless, staff are caring and interact positively with children overall. Children show willingness to attend, are fairly settled, and their behaviour is positive. Pre-school children develop increasing independence, such as managing their self-care needs with some support.

The curriculum is weak. Staff do not routinely plan activities tailored to children's age and stage of development and to promote their learning needs. The quality of teaching throughout the nursery is variable. Staff working with children with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) do not always follow their targeted support plans. Managers do not ensure that additional funding they receive is always put to use. This does not help to promote good outcomes for all children. Nonetheless, children use the space available and make choices from the resources and about what they want to do. For example, babies like physical apparatus and looking at the nursery's farm animals outside. Toddlers enjoy making marks with pens and chalks and exploring play dough. Pre-school children enjoy construction, sand and water play.

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

- Due to recent staffing issues, while staff-to-child ratios are maintained, staff deployment throughout the nursery is changeable each day. As a result, the key-person system is ineffective. Staff working with children are not in a position to build secure relationships, promote children's individual learning needs or work with parents as well as possible.
- Some areas of the nursery are not entirely clean. This specifically relates to nappy changing areas and children's toilets, which are not well maintained. Managers have allowed one of the nursery fire exits in the 'Buttercups' room to become cluttered. Therefore, it is not easy to use if staff have to evacuate non-mobile babies. This comprises children's safety.
- Staff morale is low, and they report feeling stressed by recent issues that the nursery has been facing. Managers do not ensure that induction for new staff is thorough enough. Staff do not receive appropriate ongoing supervision and

support or have opportunities to undertake relevant training. This does not help them fulfil all of their key roles and, ultimately, to improve practice.

- The curriculum ethos relating to nature and bringing the outdoors inside is not implemented effectively. Managers and staff lack knowledge of how to sequence the curriculum to match children's learning to their ages and stages of development. Staff are not skilled in their teaching or in encouraging the best outcomes for children. They routinely provide resources for children to access from the available toys and equipment and set up some additional activities, such as gluing and sticking or painting. They do not provide a learning-rich environment that promotes and builds on what children already know and can do. As a result, at times, babies and children wander around, flit between activities and lack motivation to join in.
- A nursery special educational needs coordinator is assigned, and children with SEND have support plans in place. However, due to staffing issues, staff are stretched, and individualised and targeted support for children with SEND is limited. For example, although additional funding is secured to ensure one-to-one support for some of the children, they are not benefitting from this in practice.
- Staff talk to children and introduce key vocabulary to them. For example, babies learn the names of the nursery's farm animals and the sounds they make. Babies and children enjoy lots of singing throughout the nursery. Staff promote a love of books. For example, toddlers enjoy making aliens from a familiar story that they have been reading. Staff help pre-school children explore mathematical concepts of number, space and capacity, using props linked to a book they enjoy.
- Parents express that they are happy with the new manager and feel the staff team work hard and are caring. Staff share information with parents about the daily routines and children's care needs. However, parents report that since the nursery takeover, there has been a lack of communication from the new company and general management team. Due to changes in staffing, key persons are not clearly assigned. As a result, staff are not well placed to promote children's learning and keep parents sufficiently informed.
- Staff get to know children's care needs quickly, even when spending time in rooms they are not normally based in. Staff keep children dry and clean and encourage them to routinely wash hands before eating and after messy activities. The nursery menu is healthy, and children's varied dietary needs are catered for by the nursery chef. Babies and children go outside each day and get plenty of fresh air. Staff encourage physical activity. For example, babies and toddlers enjoy low-level climbing apparatus, and pre-school children join in with a multi-skills session run by an external professional.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are not effective.

Managers and staff do not conduct regular safety checks of the entire premises, and steps are not taken to ensure the accessibility of fire exits. Although

recruitment processes are robust and staff are suitably vetted, new staff do not receive thorough inductions. They are not confident in the nursery's health and safety policies and do not know how to implement emergency evacuation procedures. Staff do not ensure that nappy changing areas and toilets are clean and kept in a good condition. Nevertheless, the nursery is very secure, and managers ensure that there is an adequate number of staff on site to work with children. There are enough staff with paediatric first-aid training to manage accidents and injuries as needed. Managers and staff fully understand their child protection responsibilities, and their knowledge of child abuse and neglect is secure. They know how to report concerns about a child's welfare, either at home or in the nursery. This helps to protect children from some types of harm.

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
ensure that all fire exits are free from obstruction and that all staff are trained and confident in implementing the nursery's evacuation procedures	24/02/2023
ensure that nappy changing facilities and children's toilets are clean and well maintained	24/02/2023
ensure arrangements for staff deployment meet children's needs at all times, and keep parents informed of staffing changes	24/02/2023
improve induction for new staff, and ensure all staff receive appropriate support and undertake relevant training to fulfil all of their key roles and improve practice	24/02/2023
improve the curriculum and ensure staff plan and provide activities that are tailored to children's ages and stages to extend their development	24/03/2023
increase the quality of the workforce, and ensure staff are well-skilled teachers who are able to encourage the best outcomes for children	24/03/2023

implement effective arrangements to support children with SEND, including following their targeted support plans and making best use of any additional funding	24/02/2023
implement an effective key-person system and ensure these persons tailor children's learning to their individual needs and share two-way information with parents about the provision and children's progress.	24/02/2023

Setting details

Unique reference number	200597
Local authority	Warwickshire
Inspection number	10277005
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 5
Total number of places	140
Number of children on roll	150
Name of registered person	Freshfields Nursery Schools Limited
Registered person unique reference number	RP522936
Telephone number	01789 261633
Date of previous inspection	12 February 2019

Information about this early years setting

Freshfields Nursery School Ltd registered in 1998. The nursery employs 35 members of staff, including 30 who work directly with the children. Of these, 16 hold appropriate early years qualifications at level 2 and above, including two with level 6 and one with qualified teacher status. The nursery operates all year around. 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
Anne Dyoss

Inspection activities

- This was the first routine inspection the provider received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. The inspectors discussed the impact of the pandemic with the provider and have 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 inspectors viewed the provision and discussed the safety and suitability of the premises.
- The manager 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. Joint observations were completed.
- The inspectors talked to staff at appropriate times during the inspection and took account of their views.
- The inspectors spoke with the area manager and manager about the leadership and management of the setting.
- The inspectors spoke to several parents during the inspection and took account of their views.
- 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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